This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

3 3433 08162540 6

ESSAYS

AND

TREATISES

ON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

By DAVID HUME, Esqr

VOL. II.

CONTAINING

AN INQUIRY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING; A DISSERTATION ON THE PASSIONS; AN INQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS; AND, THE NATURAL HIST. OF RELIGION.

A NEW EDITION.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

DIALOGUES CONCERNING NATURAL RELIGION.

LIBRARY NEW-YORK

EDINBURGH:
Printed for T. CADELL, London; and
BELL & BRADFUTE, and T. DUNCAN, Edinburgh.

M.DCC.XCIII.

NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

ADVERTISEMENT.

MOST of the principles and reaſonings, contained in this volume, were publiſhed in a work in three volumes, called *A Treatiſe of Human Nature:* A work which the Author had projected before he left College, and which he wrote and publiſhed not long after. But not finding it ſucceſsful, he was ſenſible of his error in going to the preſs too early, and he caſt the whole anew in the following pieces; where ſome negligences in his former reaſoning, and more in the expreſſion, are, he hopes, corrected. Yet ſeveral writers, who have honoured the Author's Philoſophy with anſwers, have taken care to direct all their batteries againſt that juvenile work, which the Author never acknowledged, and have affected to triumph in any advantages which, they imagined, they had obtained over it: A practice very contrary to all rules of candour and fair-dealing, and a ſtrong inſtance of thoſe polemical artifices, which a bigoted zeal thinks itſelf authoriſed to employ. Henceforth the Author deſires, that the following Pieces may alone be regarded as containing his philoſophical ſentiments and principles.

THE

CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

An INQUIRY concerning HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

Section		Page
I.	OF the different ſpecies of Philoſophy	17
II.	Of the Origin of Ideas	30
III.	Of the Aſſociation of Ideas	36
IV.	Sceptical Doubts concerning the Operations of the Underſtanding	38
V.	Sceptical Solution of theſe Doubts	54
VI.	Of Probability	70
VII.	Of the Idea of neceſſary Connection	74
VIII.	Of Liberty and Neceſſity	94
IX.	Of the Reaſon of Animals	120
X.	Of Miracles	124
XI.	Of a particular Providence and of a future State	148
XII.	Of the Academical or Sceptical Philoſophy	166
	A DISSERTATION on the PASSIONS	184

An

An INQUIRY concerning the PRINCIPLES of MORALS.

Section		Page
I.	OF the general Principles of Morals	222
II.	Of Benevolence	229
III.	Of Juſtice	236
IV.	Of Political Society	257
V.	Why Utility pleaſes	264
VI.	Of Qualities uſeful to Ourſelves	284
VII.	Of Qualities immediately agreeable to Ourſelves	301
VIII.	Of Qualities immediately agreeable to Others	313
IX.	Concluſion	321

APPENDIX.

I.	Concerning moral Sentiment	339
II.	Of Self-love	350
III.	Some farther Conſiderations with regard to Juſtice	358
IV.	Of ſome verbal Diſputes	365
	A DIALOGUE	377

The NATURAL HISTORY of RELIGION.

	INTRODUCTION	409
I.	THAT Polytheiſm was the primary Religion of Men	401
II.	Origin of Polytheiſm	406
III.	The ſame Subject continued	409
IV.	Deities not conſidered as Creators or Formers of the World	414
V.	Various	

Section		Page
V.	Various Forms of Polytheiſm: Allegory, Hero-Worſhip	422
VI.	Origin of Theiſm from Polytheiſm	426
VII.	Confirmation of this Doctrine	432
VIII.	Flux and Reflux of Polytheiſm and Theiſm	434
IX.	Compariſon of theſe Religions with regard to Perſecution and Toleration	436
X.	With regard to Courage or Abaſement	440
XI.	With regard to Reaſon or Abſurdity	442
XII.	With regard to Doubt or Conviction	445
XIII.	Impious Conceptions of the divine Nature in popular Religions of both Kinds	458
XIV.	Bad influence of popular Religions on Morality	462
XV.	General Corollary	467

DIALOGUES concerning NATURAL RELIGION.

PAMPHILUS to HERMIPPUS 472

AN

AN

INQUIRY

CONCERNING

HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

SECTION I.

Of the Different Species of Philoſophy.

MORAL philoſophy, or the ſcience of human nature, may be treated after two different manners; each of which has its peculiar merit, and may contribute to the entertainment, inſtruction, and reformation of mankind. The one conſiders man chiefly as born for action, and as influenced in his meaſures by taſte and ſentiment; purſuing one object, and avoiding another, according to the value which theſe objects ſeem to poſſeſs, and according to the light in which they preſent themſelves. As virtue, of all objects, is allowed to be the moſt valuable, this ſpecies of philoſophers paint her in the moſt amiable colours; borrowing all helps from poetry and eloquence, and treating their ſubject in an eaſy and obvious manner, and ſuch as is beſt fitted to pleaſe the imagination, and engage the affections. They ſelect the moſt ſtriking

obſervations and inſtances from common life; place oppoſite characters in a proper contraſt; and, alluring us into the paths of virtue by the views of glory and happineſs, direct our ſteps in theſe paths by the ſoundeſt precepts and moſt illuſtrious examples. They make us feel the difference between vice and virtue; they excite and regulate our ſentiments; and, ſo they can but bend our hearts to the love of probity and true honour, they think that they have fully attained the end of all their labours.

The other ſpecies of philoſophers conſider man in the light of a reaſonable, rather than an active being; and endeavour to form his underſtanding, more than cultivate his manners. They regard human nature as a ſubject of ſpeculation; and with a narrow ſcrutiny examine it, in order to find thoſe principles which regulate our underſtanding, excite our ſentiments, and make us approve or blame any particular object, action, or behaviour. They think it a reproach to all literature, that philoſophy ſhould not yet have fixed, beyond controverſy, the foundation of morals, reaſoning, and criticiſm; and ſhould for ever talk of truth and falſehood, vice and virtue, beauty and deformity, without being able to determine the ſource of thoſe diſtinctions. While they attempt this arduous taſk, they are deterred by no difficulties; but, proceeding from particular inſtances to general principles, they ſtill puſh on their inquiries to principles more general, and reſt not ſatisfied till they arrive at thoſe original principles, by which, in every ſcience, all human curioſity muſt be bounded. Though their ſpeculations ſeem abſtract and even unintelligible to common readers, they aim at the approbation of the learned and the wiſe; and think themſelves ſufficiently compenſated for the labour

bour of their whole lives, if they can diſcover ſome hidden truths, which may contribute to the inſtruction of poſterity.

It is certain, that the eaſy and obvious philoſophy will always, with the generality of mankind, have the preference above the accurate and abſtruſe; and by many will be recommended, not only as more agreeable, but more uſeful, than the other. It enters more into common life; moulds the heart and affections; and, by touching thoſe principles which actuate men, reforms their conduct, and brings them nearer to that model of perfection which it deſcribes. On the contrary, the abſtruſe philoſophy, being founded on a turn of mind which cannot enter into buſineſs and action, vaniſhes when the philoſopher leaves the ſhade, and comes into open day; nor can its principles eaſily retain any influence over our conduct and behaviour. The feelings of our heart, the agitation of our paſſions, the vehemence of our affections, diſſipate all its concluſions, and reduce the profound philoſopher to a mere plebeian.

This alſo muſt be confeſſed, that the moſt durable, as well as juſteſt fame, has been acquired by the eaſy philoſophy; and that abſtract reaſoners ſeem hitherto to have enjoyed only a momentary reputation, from the caprice or ignorance of their own age, but have not been able to ſupport their renown with more equitable poſterity. It is eaſy for a profound philoſopher to commit a miſtake in his ſubtile reaſonings; and one miſtake is the neceſſary parent of another, while he puſhes on his conſequences, and is not deterred from embracing any concluſion, by its unuſual appearance, or its contradiction to popular opinion. But a philoſopher, who purpoſes only to repreſent the common

ſenſe of mankind in more beautiful and more engaging colours, if by accident he falls into error, goes no farther; but, renewing his appeal to common ſenſe, and the natural ſentiments of the mind, returns into the right path, and ſecures himſelf from any dangerous illuſions. The fame of Cicero flouriſhes at preſent; but that of Ariſtotle is utterly decayed. La Bruyere paſſes the ſeas, and ſtill maintains his reputation; but the glory of Malebranche is confined to his own nation, and to his own age. And Addiſon, perhaps, will be read with pleaſure, when Locke ſhall be entirely forgotten.

The mere philoſopher is a character which is commonly but little acceptable in the world, as being ſuppoſed to contribute nothing either to the advantage or pleaſure of ſociety; while he lives remote from communication with mankind, and is wrapped up in principles and notions equally remote from their comprehenſion. On the other hand, the mere ignorant is ſtill more deſpiſed; nor is any thing deemed a ſurer ſign of an illiberal genius in an age and nation where the ſciences flouriſh, than to be entirely deſtitute of all reliſh for thoſe noble entertainments. The moſt perfect character is ſuppoſed to lie between thoſe extremes; retaining an equal ability and taſte for books, company, and buſineſs; preſerving in converſation that diſcernment and delicacy which ariſe from polite letters; and in buſineſs, that probity and accuracy which are the natural reſult of a juſt philoſophy. In order to diffuſe and cultivate ſo accompliſhed a character, nothing can be more uſeful than compoſitions of the eaſy ſtyle and manner, which draw not too much from life, require no deep application or retreat to be comprehended, and ſend back the ſtudent among mankind

full

full of noble ſentiments and wiſe precepts, applicable to every exigence of human life. By means of ſuch compoſitions, virtue becomes amiable, ſcience agreeable, company inſtructive, and retirement entertaining.

Man is a reaſonable being; and, as ſuch, receives from ſcience his proper food and nouriſhment: But ſo narrow are the bounds of human underſtanding, that little ſatisfaction can be hoped for in this particular, either from the extent or ſecurity of his acquiſitions. Man is a ſociable, no leſs than a reaſonable, being: But neither can he always enjoy company agreeable and amuſing, or preſerve the proper reliſh for them. Man is alſo an active being; and from that diſpoſition, as well as from the various neceſſities of human life, muſt ſubmit to buſineſs and occupation: But the mind requires ſome relaxation, and cannot always ſupport its bent to care and induſtry. It ſeems, then, that nature has pointed out a mixed kind of life as moſt ſuitable to human race, and ſecretly admoniſhed them to allow none of theſe biaſſes to draw too much, ſo as to incapacitate them for other occupations and entertainments. Indulge your paſſion for ſcience, ſays ſhe, but let your ſcience be human, and ſuch as may have a direct reference to action and ſociety. Abſtruſe thought and profound reſearches I prohibit, and will ſeverely puniſh, by the penſive melancholy which they introduce, by the endleſs uncertainty in which they involve you, and by the cold reception your pretended diſcoveries ſhall meet with when communicated. Be a philoſopher; but, amidſt all your philoſophy, be ſtill a man.

Were the generality of mankind contented to prefer the eaſy philoſophy to the abſtract and profound,

without throwing any blame or contempt on the latter, it might not be improper, perhaps, to comply with this general opinion, and allow every man to enjoy, without oppoſition, his own taſte and ſentiment. But as the matter is often carried farther, even to the abſolute rejecting of all profound reaſonings, or what is commonly called Metaphyſics, we ſhall now proceed to conſider what can reaſonably be pleaded in their behalf.

We may begin with obſerving, that one conſiderable advantage, which reſults from the accurate and abſtract philoſophy, is, its ſubſerviency to the eaſy and humane; which, without the former, can never attain a ſufficient degree of exactneſs in its ſentiments, precepts, or reaſonings. All polite letters are nothing but pictures of human life in various attitudes and ſituations; and inſpire us with different ſentiments, of praiſe or blame, admiration or ridicule, according to to the qualities of the object which they ſet before us. An artiſt muſt be better qualified to ſucceed in this undertaking, who, beſides a delicate taſte and a quick apprehenſion, poſſeſſes an accurate knowledge of the internal fabric, the operations of the underſtanding, the workings of the paſſions, and the various ſpecies of ſentiment which diſcriminate vice and virtue. How painful ſoever this inward ſearch or inquiry may appear, it becomes, in ſome meaſure, requiſite to thoſe, who would deſcribe with ſucceſs the obvious and outward appearances of life and manners. The anatomiſt preſents to the eye the moſt hideous and diſagreeable objects; but his ſcience is uſeful to the painter in delineating even a Venus or an Helen. While the latter employs all the richeſt colours of his art, and gives his figures the moſt graceful and engaging airs, he

he muſt ſtill carry his attention to the inward ſtructure of the human body, the poſition of the muſcles, the fabric of the bones, and the uſe and figure of every part or organ. Accuracy is, in every caſe, advantageous to beauty, and juſt reaſoning to delicate ſentiment. In vain would we exalt the one by depreciating the other.

Beſides, we may obſerve, in every art or profeſſion, even thoſe which moſt concern life or action, that a ſpirit of accuracy, however acquired, carries all of them nearer their perfection, and renders them more ſubſervient to the intereſts of ſociety. And though a philoſopher may live remote from buſineſs, the genius of philoſophy, if carefully cultivated by ſeveral, muſt gradually diffuſe itſelf throughout the whole ſociety, and beſtow a ſimilar correctneſs on every art or calling. The politician will acquire greater foreſight and ſubtility, in the ſubdividing and balancing of power; the lawyer more method and finer principles in his reaſonings; and the general more regularity in his diſcipline, and more caution in his plans and operations. The ſtability of modern governments above the ancient, and the accuracy of modern philoſophy, have improved, and probably will ſtill improve, by ſimilar gradations.

Were there no advantage to be reaped from theſe ſtudies, beyond the gratification of an innocent curioſity, yet ought not even this to be deſpiſed; as being an acceſſion to thoſe few ſafe and harmleſs pleaſures, which are beſtowed on human race. The ſweeteſt and moſt inoffenſive path of life leads through the avenues of ſcience and learning; and whoever can either remove any obſtructions in this way, or open up any new proſpect, ought ſo far to be eſteemed a benefactor to mankind. And though theſe reſearches may appear

painful and fatiguing, it is with ſome minds as with ſome bodies, which being endowed with vigorous and florid health, require ſevere exerciſe, and reap a pleaſure from what, to the generality of mankind, may ſeem burdenſome and laborious. Obſcurity, indeed, is painful to the mind as well as to the eye; but to bring light from obſcurity, by whatever labour, muſt needs be delightful and rejoicing.

But this obſcurity, in the profound and abſtract philoſophy, is objected to, not only as painful and fatiguing, but as the inevitable ſource of uncertainty and error. Here, indeed, lies the juſteſt and moſt plauſible objection againſt a conſiderable part of metaphyſics, that they are not properly a ſcience; but ariſe, either from the fruitleſs efforts of human vanity, which would penetrate into ſubjects utterly inacceſſible to the underſtanding; or from the craft of popular ſuperſtitions, which, being unable to defend themſelves on fair ground, raiſe theſe entangling brambles to cover and protect their weakneſs. Chaſed from the open country, theſe robbers fly into the foreſt, and lie in wait to break in upon every unguarded avenue of the mind, and overwhelm it with religious fears and prejudices. The ſtouteſt antagoniſt, if he remit his watch a moment, is oppreſſed. And many, through cowardice and folly, open the gates to the enemies, and willingly receive them with reverence and ſubmiſſion as their legal ſovereigns.

But is this a ſufficient reaſon, why philoſophers ſhould deſiſt from ſuch reſearches, and leave ſuperſtition ſtill in poſſeſſion of her retreat? Is it not proper to draw an oppoſite concluſion, and perceive the neceſſity of carrying the war into the moſt ſecret receſſes of the enemy? In vain do we hope, that men, from

frequent

frequent diſappointment, will at laſt abandon ſuch airy ſciences, and diſcover the proper province of human reaſon. For, beſides that many perſons find too ſenſible an intereſt in perpetually recalling ſuch topics; beſides this, I ſay, the motive of blind deſpair can never reaſonably have place in the ſciences; ſince, however unſucceſsful former attempts may have proved, there is ſtill room to hope, that the induſtry, good fortune, or improved ſagacity of ſucceeding generations, may reach diſcoveries unknown to former ages. Each adventurous genius will ſtill leap at the arduous prize, and find himſelf ſtimulated, rather than diſcouraged, by the failures of his predeceſſors; while he hopes that the glory of achieving ſo hard an adventure is reſerved for him alone. The only method of freeing learning, at once, from theſe abſtruſe queſtions, is, to inquire ſeriouſly into the nature of human underſtanding, and ſhow, from an exact analyſis of its powers and capacity, that it is by no means fitted for ſuch remote and abſtruſe ſubjects. We muſt ſubmit to this fatigue, in order to live at eaſe ever after; and muſt cultivate true metaphyſics with ſome care, in order to deſtroy the falſe and adulterate. Indolence, which, to ſome perſons, affords a ſafeguard againſt this deceitful philoſophy, is, with others, overbalanced by curioſity; and deſpair, which, at ſome moments, prevails, may give place afterwards to ſanguine hopes and expectations. Accurate and juſt reaſoning is the only catholic remedy, fitted for all perſons and all diſpoſitions; and is alone able to ſubvert that abſtruſe philoſophy and metaphyſical jargon, which, being mixed up with popular ſuperſtition, renders it in a manner impenetrable to careleſs reaſoners, and gives it the air of ſcience and wiſdom.

Beſides

Beſides this advantage of rejecting, after deliberate inquiry, the moſt uncertain and diſagreeable part of learning, there are many poſitive advantages which reſult from an accurate ſcrutiny into the powers and faculties of human nature. It is remarkable concerning the operations of the mind, that, though moſt intimately preſent to us, yet, whenever they become the object of reflection, they ſeem involved in obſcurity; nor can the eye readily find thoſe lines and boundaries which diſcriminate and diſtinguiſh them. The objects are too fine to remain long in the ſame aſpect or ſituation; and muſt be apprehended in an inſtant, by a ſuperior penetration, derived from nature, and improved by habit and reflection. It becomes, therefore, no inconſiderable part of ſcience barely to know the different operations of the mind, to ſeparate them from each other, to claſs them under their proper heads, and to correct all that ſeeming diſorder, in which they lie involved, when made the object of reflection and inquiry. This taſk of ordering and diſtinguiſhing, which has no merit, when performed with regard to external bodies, the objects of our ſenſes, riſes in its value, when directed towards the operations of the mind, in proportion to the difficulty and labour which we meet with in performing it. And if we can go no farther than this mental geography, or delineation of the diſtinct parts and powers of the mind, it is at leaſt a ſatisfaction to go ſo far; and the more obvious this ſcience may appear (and it is by no means obvious), the more contemptible ſtill muſt the ignorance of it be eſteemed, in all pretenders to learning and philoſophy.

Nor can there remain any ſuſpicion, that this ſcience is uncertain and chimerical, unleſs we ſhould entertain ſuch a ſcepticiſm as is entirely ſubverſive of all ſpeculation,

tion, and even action. It cannot be doubted that the mind is endowed with ſeveral powers and faculties; that theſe powers are diſtinct from each other; that what is really diſtinct to the immediate perception, may be diſtinguiſhed by reflection; and, conſequently, that there is a truth and falſehood in all propoſitions on this ſubject, and a truth and falſehood, which lie not beyond the compaſs of human underſtanding. There are many obvious diſtinctions of this kind, ſuch as thoſe between the will and underſtanding, the imagination and paſſions, which fall within the comprehenſion of every human creature; and the finer and more philoſophical diſtinctions are no leſs real and certain, though more difficult to be comprehended. Some inſtances, eſpecially late ones, of ſucceſs in theſe inquiries, may give us a juſter notion of the certainty and ſolidity of this branch of learning. And ſhall we eſteem it worthy the labour of a philoſopher, to give us a true ſyſtem of the planets, and adjuſt the poſition and order of thoſe remote bodies; while we affect to overlook thoſe who, with ſo much ſucceſs, delineate the parts of the mind, in which we are ſo intimately concerned?

But may we not hope, that philoſophy, if cultivated with care, and encouraged by the attention of the public, may carry its reſearches ſtill farther, and diſcover, at leaſt in ſome degree, the ſecret ſprings and principles by which the human mind is actuated in its operation? Aſtronomers had long contented themſelves with proving, from the phænomena, the true motions, order, and magnitude of the heavenly bodies: till a philoſopher, at laſt, aroſe, who ſeems, from the happieſt reaſoning, to have alſo determined the laws and forces, by which the revolutions of the planets are governed and

and directed. The like has been performed with regard to other parts of nature. And there is no reaſon to deſpair of equal ſucceſs in our inquiries concerning the mental powers and œconomy, if proſecuted with equal capacity and caution. It is probable, that one operation and principle of the mind depends on another; which, again, may be reſolved into one more general and univerſal: And, how far theſe reſearches may poſſibly be carried, it will be difficult for us before, or even after, a careful trial, exactly to determine. This is certain, that attempts of this kind are every day made, even by thoſe who philoſophiſe the moſt negligently: and nothing can be more requiſite, than to enter upon the enterpriſe with thorough care and attention; that, if it ly within the compaſs of human underſtanding, it may at laſt be happily achieved; if not, it may, however, be rejected with ſome confidence and ſecurity. This laſt concluſion, ſurely, is not deſirable; nor ought it to be embraced too raſhly. For how much muſt we diminiſh from the beauty and value of this ſpecies of philoſophy, upon ſuch a ſuppoſition? Moraliſts have hitherto been accuſtomed, when they conſidered the vaſt multitude and diverſity of thoſe actions that excite our approbation or diſlike, to ſearch for ſome common principle on which this variety of ſentiments might depend: And though they have ſometimes carried the matter too far, by their paſſion for ſome one general principle; it muſt, however, be confeſſed, that they are excuſable in expecting to find ſome general principles, into which all the vices and virtues were juſtly to be reſolved. The like has been the endeavour of critics, logicians, and even politicians: nor have their attempts been wholly unſucceſsful; though perhaps longer time, greater accuracy, and more

more ardent application, may bring theſe ſciences ſtill nearer their perfection. To throw up at once all pretenſions of this kind, may juſtly be deemed more raſh, precipitate, and dogmatical, than even the boldeſt and moſt affirmative philoſophy, that has ever attempted to impoſe its crude dictates and principles on mankind.

What though theſe reaſonings concerning human nature ſeem abſtract, and of difficult comprehenſion? This affords no preſumption of their falſehood. On the contrary, it ſeems impoſſible, that what has hitherto eſcaped ſo many wiſe and profound philoſophers, can be very obvious and eaſy. And whatever pains theſe reſearches may coſt us, we may think ourſelves ſufficiently rewarded, not only in point of profit, but of pleaſure, if, by that means, we can make any addition to our ſtock of knowledge, in ſubjects of ſuch unſpeakable importance.

But as, after all, the abſtractedneſs of theſe ſpeculations is no recommendation, but rather a diſadvantage to them, and as this difficulty may, perhaps, be ſurmounted by care and art, and the avoiding of all unneceſſary detail, we have, in the following inquiry, attempted to throw ſome light upon ſubjects, from which, uncertainty has hitherto deterred the wiſe, and obſcurity the ignorant. Happy, if we can unite the boundaries of the different ſpecies of philoſophy, by reconciling profound inquiry with clearneſs, and truth with novelty! And ſtill more happy, if, reaſoning in this eaſy manner, we can undermine the foundations of an abſtruſe philoſophy, which ſeems to have hitherto ſerved only as a ſhelter to ſuperſtition, and a cover to abſurdity and error!

SEC-

SECTION II.

Of the Origin of Ideas.

EVERY one will readily allow, that there is a conſiderable difference between the perceptions of the mind, when a man feels the pain of exceſſive heat, or the pleaſure of moderate warmth; and when he afterwards recals to his memory this ſenſation, or anticipates it by his imagination. Theſe faculties may mimic or copy the perceptions of the ſenſes, but they never can entirely reach the force and vivacity of the original ſentiment. The utmoſt we ſay of them, even when they operate with greateſt vigour, is, that they repreſent their object in ſo lively a manner, that we could almoſt ſay we feel or ſee it: But, except the mind be diſordered by diſeaſe or madneſs, they never can arrive at ſuch a pitch of vivacity, as to render theſe perceptions altogether undiſtinguiſhable. All the colours of poetry, however ſplendid, can never paint natural objects in ſuch a manner as to make the deſcription be taken for a real landſkip. The moſt lively thought is ſtill inferior to the dulleſt ſenſation.

We may obſerve a like diſtinction to run through all the other perceptions of the mind. A man in a fit of anger, is actuated in a very different manner from one who only thinks of that emotion. If you tell me that any perſon is in love, I eaſily underſtand your meaning, and form a juſt conception of his ſituation; but never can miſtake that conception for the real diſorders and

and agitations of the paſſion. When we reflect on our paſt ſentiments and affections, our thought is a faithful mirror, and copies its objects truly; but the colours which it employs are faint and dull, in compariſon of thoſe in which our original perceptions were clothed. It requires no nice diſcernment or metaphyſical head to mark the diſtinction between them.

Here, therefore, we may divide all the perceptions of the mind into two claſſes or ſpecies, which are diſtinguiſhed by their different degrees of force and vivacity. The leſs forcible and lively are commonly denominated THOUGHTS OR IDEAS. The other ſpecies want a name in our language, and in moſt others; I ſuppoſe, becauſe it was not requiſite for any but philoſophical purpoſes, to rank them under a general term or appellation. Let us, therefore, uſe a little freedom, and call them IMPRESSIONS; employing that word in a ſenſe ſomewhat different from the uſual. By the term Impreſſion, then, I mean all our more lively perceptions, when we hear, or ſee, or feel, or love, or hate, or deſire, or will. And impreſſions are diſtinguiſhed from ideas, which are the leſs lively perceptions, of which we are conſcious, when we reflect on any of thoſe ſenſations or movements above mentioned.

Nothing, at firſt view, may ſeem more unbounded than the thought of man; which not only eſcapes all human power and authority, but is not even reſtrained within the limits of nature and reality. To form monſters, and join incongruous ſhapes and appearances, coſts the imagination no more trouble than to conceive the moſt natural and familiar objects. And while the body is confined to one planet, along which it creeps with pain and difficulty; the thought can in an inſtant tranſport us into the moſt diſtant regions of the univerſe;

verſe; or even beyond the univerſe, into the unbounded chaos, where nature is ſuppoſed to ly in total confuſion. What never was ſeen or heard of, may yet be conceived; nor is any thing beyond the power of thought, except what implies an abſolute contradiction.

But though our thought ſeems to poſſeſs this unbounded liberty, we ſhall find, upon a nearer examination, that it is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of compounding, tranſpoſing, augmenting, or diminiſhing, the materials afforded us by the ſenſes and experience. When we think of a golden mountain, we only join two conſiſtent ideas, Gold and Mountain, with which we were formerly acquainted. A virtuous horſe we can conceive; becauſe, from our own feeling, we can conceive virtue: and this we may unite to the figure and ſhape of a horſe, which is an animal familiar to us. In ſhort, all the materials of thinking, are derived either from our outward or inward ſentiment: the mixture and compoſition of theſe, belongs alone to the mind and will; or, to expreſs myſelf in philoſophical language, all our ideas or more feeble perceptions are copies of our impreſſions or more lively ones.

To prove this, the two following arguments will, I hope, be ſufficient. Firſt, when we analyze our thoughts or ideas, however compounded or ſublime, we always find, that they reſolve themſelves into ſuch ſimple ideas as were copied from a precedent feeling or ſentiment. Even thoſe ideas, which, at firſt view, ſeem the moſt wide of this origin, are found, upon a nearer ſcrutiny, to be derived from it. The idea of God, as meaning an infinitely intelligent, wiſe, and good Being, ariſes from reflecting on the operations of our

our own mind, and augmenting, without limit, thoſe qualities of goodneſs and wiſdom. We may proſecute this inquiry to what length we pleaſe; where we ſhall always find, that every idea which we examine is copied from a ſimilar impreſſion. Thoſe who would aſſert, that this poſition is not univerſally true, nor without exception, have only one, and that an eaſy, method of refuting it; by producing that idea, which, in their opinion, is not derived from this ſource. It will then be incumbent on us, if we would maintain our doctrine, to produce the impreſſion or lively perception which correſponds to it.

Secondly, If it happen, from a defect of the organ, that a man is not ſuſceptible of any ſpecies of ſenſation, we always find, that he is as little ſuſceptible of the correſpondent ideas. A blind man can form no notion of colours; a deaf man of ſounds. Reſtore either of them that ſenſe, in which he is deficient: by opening this new inlet for his ſenſations, you alſo open an inlet for the ideas; and he finds no difficulty in conceiving theſe objects. The caſe is the ſame, if the object, proper for exciting any ſenſation, has never been applied to the organ. A Laplander or Negro has no notion to the reliſh of wine. And though there are few or no inſtances of a like deficiency in the mind, where a perſon has never felt, or is wholly incapable of a ſentiment or paſſion that belongs to his ſpecies; yet we find the ſame obſervation to take place in a leſs degree. A man of mild manners can form no idea of inveterate revenge or cruelty; nor can a ſelfiſh heart eaſily conceive the heights of friendſhip and generoſity. It is readily allowed, that other beings may poſſeſs many ſenſes of which we can have no conception; becauſe the ideas of them have never been introduced to

us, in the only manner by which an idea can have acceſs to the mind, to wit, by the actual feeling and ſenſation.

There is, however, one contradictory phænomenon, which may prove, that it is not abſolutely impoſſible for ideas to ariſe, independent of their correſpondent impreſſions. I believe it will readily be allowed, that the ſeveral diſtinct ideas of colour, which enter by the eye, or thoſe of ſound, which are conveyed by the ear, are really different from each other; though, at the ſame time, reſembling. Now, if this be true of different colours, it muſt be no leſs ſo of the different ſhades of the ſame colour; as each ſhade produces a diſtinct idea, independent of the reſt. For if this ſhould be denied, it is poſſible, by the continual gradation of ſhades, to run a colour inſenſibly into what is moſt remote from it; and if you will not allow any of the means to be different, you cannot, without abſurdity, deny the extremes to be the ſame. Suppoſe, therefore, a perſon to have enjoyed his ſight for thirty years, and to have become perfectly acquainted with colours of all kinds, except one particular ſhade of blue, for inſtance, which it never has been his fortune to meet with: Let all the different ſhades of that colour, except that ſingle one, be placed before him, deſcending gradually from the deepeſt to the lighteſt; it is plain, that he will perceive a blank, where that ſhade is wanting, and will be ſenſible that there is a greater diſtance in that place between the contiguous colours, than in any other. Now, I aſk, whether it be poſſible for him, from his own imagination, to ſupply this deficiency, and raiſe up to himſelf the idea of that particular ſhade, though it had never been conveyed to him by his ſenſes? I believe there are few but will be of opinion that he can: And this

this may ſerve as a proof, that the ſimple ideas are not always, in every inſtance, derived from the correſpondent impreſſions; though this inſtance is ſo ſingular, that it is ſcarcely worth our obſerving, and does not merit, that, for it alone, we ſhould alter our general maxim.

Here, therefore, is a propoſition, which not only ſeems, in itſelf, ſimple and intelligible; but, if a proper uſe were made of it, might render every diſpute equally intelligible, and baniſh all that jargon, which has ſo long taken poſſeſſion of metaphyſical reaſonings, and drawn diſgrace upon them. All ideas, eſpecially abſtract ones, are naturally faint and obſcure: The mind has but a ſlender hold of them: They are apt to be confounded with other reſembling ideas; and when we have often employed any term, though without a diſtinct meaning, we are apt to imagine it has a determinate idea annexed to it. On the contrary, all impreſſions, that is, all ſenſations either outward or inward, are ſtrong and vivid: The limits between them are more exactly determined; nor is it eaſy to fall into any error or miſtake with regard to them. When we entertain, therefore, any ſuſpicion, that a philoſophical term is employed without any meaning or idea, (as is but too frequent) we need but inquire, from what impreſſion is that ſuppoſed idea derived? And if it be impoſſible to aſſign any, this will ſerve to confirm our ſuſpicion. By bringing ideas into ſo clear a light, we may reaſonably hope to remove all diſpute which may ariſe concerning their nature and reality *.

* See Note (A).

SECTION III.

Of the Aſſociation of Ideas.

IT is evident, that there is a principle of connection between the different thoughts or ideas of the mind, and that, in their appearance to the memory or imagination, they introduce each other with a certain degree of method and regularity. In our more ſerious thinking or diſcourſe, this is ſo obſervable, that any particular thought, which breaks in upon the regular tract or chain of ideas, is immediately remarked and rejected. And even in our wildeſt and moſt wandering reveries, nay in our very dreams, we ſhall find, if we reflect, that the imagination ran not altogether at adventures, but that there was ſtill a connection upheld among the different ideas which ſucceeded each other. Were the looſeſt and freeſt converſation to be tranſcribed, there would immediately be obſerved ſomething which connected it in all its tranſitions. Or, where this is wanting, the perſon who broke the thread of diſcourſe might ſtill inform you, that there had ſecretly revolved in his mind a ſucceſſion of thought, which had gradually led him from the ſubject of converſation. Among different languages, even where we cannot ſuſpect the leaſt connection or communication, it is found, that the words, expreſſive of ideas the moſt compounded, do yet nearly correſpond to each other: a certain proof, that the ſimple ideas, comprehended in the compound ones, were

were bound together by ſome univerſal principle, which had an equal influence on all mankind.

Though it be too obvious to eſcape obſervation, that different ideas are connected together, I do not find, that any philoſopher has attempted to enumerate or claſs all the principles of aſſociation; a ſubject, however, that ſeems worthy of curioſity. To me, there appear to be only three principles of connection among ideas, namely, Reſemblance, Contiguity in time or place, and Cauſe or Effect.

That theſe principles ſerve to connect ideas will not, I believe, be much doubted. A picture naturally leads our thoughts to the original *: The mention of one apartment in a building naturally introduces an inquiry or diſcourſe concerning the others †: And if we think of a wound, we can ſcarcely forbear reflecting on the pain which follows it ‡. But, that this enumeration is complete, and that there are no other principles of aſſociation except theſe, may be difficult to prove to the ſatisfaction of the reader, or even to a man's own ſatisfaction. All we can do, in ſuch caſes, is to run over ſeveral inſtances, and examine carefully the principle which binds the different thoughts to each other, never ſtopping till we render the principle as general as poſſible §. The more inſtances we examine, and the more care we employ, the more aſſurance ſhall we acquire, that the enumeration, which we form from the whole, is complete and entire.

* Reſemblance. † Contiguity. ‡ Cauſe and Effect.

§ For inſtance, Contraſt or Contrariety is alſo a connection among Ideas: But it may, perhaps, be conſidered as a mixture of Cauſation and Reſemblance. Where two objects are contrary, the one deſtroys the other; that is, the cauſe of its annihilation, and the idea of the annihilation of an object, implies the idea of its former exiſtence.

SECTION IV.

Sceptical Doubts concerning the Operations of the Underſtanding.

PART I.

ALL the objects of human reaſon or inquiry may naturally be divided into two kinds, to wit, Relations of Ideas, and Matters of Fact. Of the firſt kind are the ſciences of Geometry, Algebra, and Arithmetic; and, in ſhort, every affirmation which is either intuitively or demonſtratively certain. That the ſquare of the hypothenuſe is equal to the ſquare of the two ſides, is a propoſition which expreſſes a relation between theſe figures. That three times five is equal to the half of thirty, expreſſes a relation between theſe numbers. Propoſitions of this kind are diſcoverable by the mere operation of thought, without dependance on what is any where exiſtent in the univerſe. Though there never were a circle or triangle in nature, the truths demonſtrated by Euclid would for ever retain their certainty and evidence.

Matters of fact, which are the ſecond objects of human reaſon, are not aſcertained in the ſame manner; nor is our evidence of their truth, however great, of a like nature with the foregoing. The contrary of every matter of fact is ſtill poſſible; becauſe it can never imply a contradiction, and is conceived by the mind with the ſame facility and diſtinctneſs, as if ever ſo conformable to reality. That the ſun will not riſe to-morrow, is

is no leſs intelligible a propoſition, and implies no more contradiction than the affirmation, that it will riſe. We ſhould, in vain, therefore attempt to demonſtrate its falſehood. Were it demonſtratively falſe, it would imply a contradiction, and could never be diſtinctly conceived by the mind.

It may therefore be a ſubject worthy of curioſity, to inquire what is the nature of that evidence, which aſſures us of any real exiſtence and matter of fact, beyond the preſent teſtimony of our ſenſes, or the records of our memory. This part of philoſophy, it is obſervable, has been little cultivated either by the ancients or moderns; and therefore our doubts and errors, in the proſecution of ſo important an inquiry, may be the more excuſable, while we march through ſuch difficult paths, without any guide or direction. They may even prove uſeful, by exciting curioſity, and deſtroying that implicit faith and ſecurity which is the bane of all reaſoning and free inquiry. The diſcovery of defects in the common philoſophy, if any ſuch there be, will not, I preſume, be a diſcouragement, but rather an incitement, as is uſual, to attempt ſomething more full and ſatisfactory than has yet been propoſed to the public.

All reaſonings concerning matter of fact, ſeem to be founded on the relation of Cauſe and Effect. By means of that relation alone, we can go beyond the evidence of our memory and ſenſes. If you were to aſk a man, why he believes any matter of fact which is abſent; for inſtance, that his friend is in the country, or in France: he would give you a reaſon; and this reaſon would be ſome other fact: as, a letter received from him, or the knowledge of his former reſolutions and promiſes. A man, finding a watch or any other machine in a deſart iſland, would conclude, that there had

once been men in that iſland. All our reaſonings concerning fact, are of the ſame nature: And here it is conſtantly ſuppoſed, that there is a connection between the preſent fact, and that which is inferred from it. Were there nothing to bind them together, the inference would be entirely precarious. The hearing of an articulate voice and rational diſcourſe in the dark, aſſures us of the preſence of ſome perſon: Why? becauſe theſe are the effects of the human make and fabric, and cloſely connected with it. If we anatomize all the other reaſonings of this nature, we ſhall find, that they are founded on the relation of cauſe and effect, and that this relation is either near or remote, direct or collateral. Heat and light are collateral effects of fire, and the one effect may juſtly be inferred from the other.

If we would ſatisfy ourſelves, therefore, concerning the nature of that evidence, which aſſures us of matters of fact, we muſt inquire how we arrive at the knowledge of cauſe and effect.

I ſhall venture to affirm as a general propoſition, which admits of no exception, that the knowledge of this relation is not, in any inſtance, attained by reaſonings *à priori*; but ariſes entirely from experience, when we find, that any particular objects are conſtantly conjoined with each other. Let an object be preſented to a man of ever ſo ſtrong natural reaſon and abilities; if that object be entirely new to him, he will not be able, by the moſt accurate examination of its ſenſible qualities, to diſcover any of its cauſes or effects. Adam, though his rational faculties be ſuppoſed, at the very firſt, entirely perfect, could not have inferred, from the fluidity and tranſparency of water, that it would ſuffocate him; or from the light and warmth of fire, that it would conſume him. No object ever diſcovers, by the

the qualities which appear to the ſenſes, either the cauſes which produced it, or the effects which will ariſe from it; nor can our reaſon, unaſſiſted by experience, ever draw any inference concerning real exiſtence and matter of fact.

This propoſition, 'That cauſes and effects are diſcoverable, not by reaſon, but by experience,' will readily be admitted with regard to ſuch objects as we remember to have once been altogether unknown to us; ſince we muſt be conſcious of the utter inability which we then lay under of foretelling what would ariſe from them. Preſent two ſmooth pieces of marble to a man who has no tincture of natural philoſophy; he will never diſcover that they will adhere together in ſuch a manner as to require great force to ſeparate them in a direct line, while they make ſo ſmall a reſiſtance to a lateral preſſure. Such events as bear little analogy to the common courſe of nature, are alſo readily confeſſed to be known only by experience: nor does any man imagine that the exploſion of gunpowder, or the attraction of a loadſtone, could ever be diſcovered by arguments *à priori*. In like manner, when an effect is ſuppoſed to depend upon an intricate machinery or ſecret ſtructure of parts, we make no difficulty in attributing all our knowledge of it to experience. Who will aſſert, that he can give the ultimate reaſon, why milk or bread is proper nouriſhment for a man, not for a lion or a tyger?

But the ſame truth may not appear at firſt ſight to have the ſame evidence with regard to events, which have become familiar to us from our firſt appearance in the world, which bear a cloſe analogy to the whole courſe of nature, and which are ſuppoſed to depend on the ſimple qualities of objects, without any ſecret ſtructure

ture of parts. We are apt to imagine, that we could diſcover theſe effects by the mere operation of our reaſon, without experience. We fancy, that were we brought on a ſudden into this world, we could at firſt have inferred, that one billiard-ball would communicate motion to another upon impulſe; and that we needed not to have waited for the event, in order to pronounce with certainty concerning it. Such is the influence of cuſtom, that, where it is ſtrongeſt, it not only covers our natural ignorance, but even conceals itſelf, and ſeems not to take place, merely becauſe it is found in the higheſt degree.

But, to convince us that all the laws of nature, and all the operations of bodies, without exception, are known only by experience, the following reflections may perhaps ſuffice. Were any object preſented to us, and were we required to pronounce concerning the effect which will reſult from it, without conſulting paſt obſervation; after what manner, I beſeech you, muſt the mind proceed in this operation? It muſt invent or imagine ſome event which it aſcribes to the object as its effect; and it is plain that this invention muſt be entirely arbitrary. The mind can never poſſibly find the effect in the ſuppoſed cauſe, by the moſt accurate ſcrutiny and examination: For the effect is totally different from the cauſe, and conſequently can never be diſcovered in it. Motion in the ſecond billiard-ball, is a quite diſtinct event from motion in the firſt; nor is there any thing in the one, to ſuggeſt the ſmalleſt hint of the other. A ſtone or piece of metal raiſed into the air, and left without any ſupport, immediately falls: But, to conſider the matter *à priori*, is there any thing we diſcover in this ſituation which can beget the idea of

of a downward, rather than an upward, or any other motion, in the ſtone or metal?

And as the firſt imagination or invention of a particular effect, in all natural operations, is arbitrary, where we conſult not experience, ſo muſt we alſo eſteem the ſuppoſed tie or connection between the cauſe and effect which binds them together, and renders it impoſſible that any other effect could reſult from the operation of that cauſe. When I ſee, for inſtance, a billiard-ball moving in a ſtraight line towards another; even ſuppoſe motion in the ſecond ball ſhould by accident be ſuggeſted to me as the reſult of their contact or impulſe; may I not conceive, that a hundred different events might as well follow from that cauſe? May not both theſe balls remain at abſolute reſt? May not the firſt ball return in a ſtraight line, or leap off from the ſecond in any line or direction? All theſe ſuppoſitions are conſiſtent and conceivable. Why then ſhould we give the preference to one, which is no more conſiſtent or conceivable than the reſt? All our reaſonings *à priori* will never be able to ſhow us any foundation for this preference.

In a word, then, every effect is a diſtinct event from its cauſe. It could not therefore be diſcovered in the cauſe; and the firſt invention or conception of it, *à priori*, muſt be entirely arbitrary. And even after it is ſuggeſted, the conjunction of it with the cauſe muſt appear equally arbitrary; ſince there are always many other effects, which, to reaſon, muſt ſeem fully as conſiſtent and natural. In vain, therefore, ſhould we pretend to determine any ſingle event, or infer any cauſe or effect, without the aſſiſtance of obſervation and experience.

Hence

Hence we may diſcover the reaſon, why no philoſopher, who is rational and modeſt, has ever pretended to aſſign the ultimate cauſe of any natural operation, or to ſhow diſtinctly the action of that power, which produces any ſingle effect in the univerſe. It is confeſſed, that the utmoſt effort of human reaſon is, to reduce the principles productive of natural phænomena to a greater ſimplicity, and to reſolve the many particular effects into a few general cauſes, by means of reaſonings from analogy, experience, and obſervation. But as to the cauſes of theſe general cauſes, we ſhould in vain attempt their diſcovery; nor ſhall we ever be able to ſatisfy ourſelves by any particular explication of them. Theſe ultimate ſprings and principles are totally ſhut up from human curioſity and inquiry. Elaſticity, gravity, coheſion of parts, communication of motion by impulſe; theſe are probably the ultimate cauſes and principles which we ſhall ever diſcover in nature; and we may eſteem ourſelves ſufficiently happy, if, by accurate inquiry and reaſoning, we can trace up the particular phænomena to, or near to, theſe general principles. The moſt perfect philoſophy of the natural kind, only ſtaves off our ignorance a little longer; as perhaps the moſt perfect philoſophy of the moral or metaphyſical kind ſerves only to diſcover larger portions of it. Thus, the obſervation of human blindneſs and weakneſs is the reſult of all philoſophy, and meets us, at every turn, in ſpite of our endeavours to elude or avoid it.

Nor is geometry, when taken into the aſſiſtance of natural philoſophy, ever able to remedy this defect, or lead us into the knowledge of ultimate cauſes, by all that accuracy of reaſoning for which it is ſo juſtly celebrated. Every part of mixed mathematics proceeds upon

upon the ſuppoſition, that certain laws are eſtabliſhed by nature in her operations; and abſtract reaſonings are employed, either to aſſiſt experience in the diſcovery of theſe laws, or to determine their influence in particular inſtances, where it depends upon any preciſe degree of diſtance and quantity. Thus, it is a law of motion, diſcovered by experience, that the moment or force of any body in motion is in the compound ratio or proportion of its ſolid contents and its velocity; and conſequently, that a ſmall force may remove the greateſt obſtacle, or raiſe the greateſt weight, if by any contrivance or machinery we can increaſe the velocity of that force, ſo as to make it an overmatch for its antagoniſt. Geometry aſſiſts us in the application of this law, by giving us the juſt dimenſions of all the parts and figures which can enter into any ſpecies of machine: but ſtill, the diſcovery of the law itſelf is owing merely to experience; and all the abſtract reaſonings in the world could never lead us one ſtep towards the knowledge of it. When we reaſon *à priori*, and conſider merely any object or cauſe, as it appears to the mind, independent of all obſervation, it never could ſuggeſt to us the notion of any diſtinct object, ſuch as its effect; much leſs, ſhow us the inſeparable and inviolable connection between them. A man muſt be very ſagacious, who could diſcover, by reaſoning, that cryſtal is the effect of heat, and ice of cold, without being previouſly acquainted with the operation of theſe qualities.

PART II.

But we have not yet attained any tolerable ſatisfaction with regard to the queſtion firſt propoſed. Each ſolution

ſolution ſtill gives riſe to a new queſtion as difficult as the foregoing, and leads us on to farther inquiries. When it is aſked, What is the nature of all our reaſonings concerning matter of fact? the proper anſwer ſeems to be, That they are founded on the relation of cauſe and effect. When, again, it is aſked, What is the foundation of all our reaſonings and concluſions concerning that relation? it may be replied in one word, Experience. But if we ſtill carry on our ſifting humour, and aſk, What is the foundation of all concluſions from experience? this implies a new queſtion, which may be of more difficult ſolution and explication. Philoſophers, that give themſelves airs of ſuperior wiſdom and ſufficiency, have a hard taſk when they encounter perſons of inquiſitive diſpoſitions, who puſh them from every corner to which they retreat, and who are ſure at laſt to bring them to ſome dangerous dilemma. The beſt expedient to prevent this confuſion, is to be modeſt in our pretenſions; and even to diſcover the difficulty ourſelves before it is objected to us. By this means, we may make a kind of merit of our very ignorance.

I ſhall content myſelf, in this ſection, with an eaſy taſk, and ſhall pretend only to give a negative anſwer to the queſtion here propoſed. I ſay then, that even after we have experience of the operations of cauſe and effect, our concluſions from that experience are not founded on reaſoning, or any proceſs of the underſtanding. This anſwer we muſt endeavour both to explain and to defend.

It muſt certainly be allowed, that nature has kept us at a great diſtance from all her ſecrets, and has afforded us only the knowledge of a few ſuperficial qualities of objects; while ſhe conceals from us thoſe powers and

and principles on which the influence of theſe objects entirely depends. Our ſenſes inform us of the colour, weight, and conſiſtence of bread; but neither ſenſe nor reaſon can ever inform us of thoſe qualities which fit it for the nouriſhment aud ſupport of a human body. Sight or feeling conveys an idea of the actual motion of bodies; but as to that wonderful force or power which would carry on a moving body for ever in a continued change of place, and which bodies never loſe but by communicating it to others; of this we cannot form the moſt diſtant conception. But notwithſtanding this ignorance of natural powers * and principles, we always preſume, when we ſee like ſenſible qualities, that they have like ſecret powers; and expect that effects, ſimilar to thoſe which we have experienced, will follow from them. If a body of like colour and conſiſtence with that bread which we have formerly ate, be preſented to us, we make no ſcruple of repeating the experiment, and foreſee, with certainty, like nouriſhment and ſupport. Now, this is a proceſs of the mind or thought, of which I would willingly know the foundation. It is allowed on all hands, that there is no known connection between the ſenſible qualities and the ſecret powers; and conſequently, that the mind is not led to form ſuch a concluſion concerning their conſtant and regular conjunction, by any thing which it knows of their nature. As to paſt Experience, it can be allowed to give direct and certain information of thoſe preciſe objects only, and that preciſe period of time which fell under its cognizance: But,

* The word, Power, is here uſed in a looſe and popular ſenſe. The more accurate explication of it would give additional evidence to this argument. See Sect. 7.

But, why this experience ſhould be extended to future times, and to other objects which, for aught we know, may be only in appearance ſimilar; this is the main queſtion on which I would inſiſt. The bread which I formerly ate nouriſhed me; that is, a body of ſuch ſenſible qualities was, at that time, endued with ſuch ſecret powers: But does it follow, that other bread muſt alſo nouriſh me at another time, and that like ſenſible qualities muſt always be attended with like ſecret powers? The conſequence ſeems nowiſe neceſſary. At leaſt, it muſt be acknowledged, that there is here a conſequence drawn by the mind; that there is a certain ſtep taken; a proceſs of thought, and an inference, which wants to be explained. Theſe two propoſitions are far from being the ſame; 'I have found that ſuch an object has always been attended with ſuch an effect;' and 'I foreſee, that other objects which are, in appearance, ſimilar, will be attended with ſimilar effects.' I ſhall allow, if you pleaſe, that the one propoſition may juſtly be inferred from the other: I know, in fact, that it always is inferred. But if you inſiſt that the inference is made by a chain of reaſoning, I deſire you to produce that reaſoning. The connection between theſe propoſitions is not intuitive. There is required a medium, which may enable the mind to draw ſuch an inference, if indeed it be drawn by reaſoning and argument. What that medium is, I muſt confeſs, paſſes my comprehenſion; and it is incumbent on thoſe to produce it, who aſſert that it really exiſts, and is the origin of all our concluſions concerning matter of fact.

This negative argument muſt certainly, in proceſs of time, become altogether convincing, if many penetrating and able philoſophers ſhall turn their inquiries this way, and no one be ever able to diſcover any connecting

necting propoſition or intermediate ſtep which ſupports the underſtanding in this concluſion. But as the queſtion is yet new, every reader may not truſt ſo far to his own penetration as to conclude, becauſe an argument eſcapes his inquiry, that therefore it does not really exiſt. For this reaſon it may be requiſite to venture upon a more difficult taſk; and, enumerating all the branches of human knowledge, endeavour to ſhow, that none of them can afford ſuch an argument.

All reaſonings may be divided into two kinds, namely, demonſtrative reaſoning, or that concerning relations of ideas and moral reaſoning, or that concerning matter of fact and exiſtence. That there are no demonſtrative arguments in the caſe, ſeems evident; ſince it implies no contradiction, that the courſe of nature may change, and that an object, ſeemingly like thoſe which we have experienced, may be attended with different or contrary effects. May I not clearly and diſtinctly conceive, that a body, falling from the clouds, and which in all other reſpects reſembles ſnow, has yet the taſte of ſalt or feeling of fire? Is there any more intelligible propoſition than to affirm, that all the trees will flouriſh in December and January, and decay in May and June? Now, whatever is intelligible, and can be diſtinctly conceived, implies no contradiction, and can never be proved falſe by any demonſtrative argument or abſtract reaſoning *à priori*.

If we be, therefore, engaged by arguments to put truſt in paſt experience, and make it the ſtandard of our future judgment, theſe arguments muſt be probable only, or ſuch as regard matter of fact and real exiſtence, according to the diviſion above mentioned. But, that there is no argument of this kind, muſt appear, if our explication of that ſpecies of reaſoning be admitted

mitted as ſolid and ſatisfactory. We have ſaid, that all arguments concerning exiſtence are founded on the relation of cauſe and effect; that our knowledge of that relation is derived entirely from experience; and that all our experimental concluſions proceed upon the ſuppoſition, that the future will be conformable to the paſt. To endeavour, therefore, the proof of this laſt ſuppoſition by probable arguments, or arguments regarding exiſtence, muſt be evidently going in a circle, and taking that for granted, which is the very point in queſtion.

In reality, all arguments from experience are founded on the ſimilarity which we diſcover among natural objects, and by which we are induced to expect effects ſimilar to thoſe which we have found to follow from ſuch objects. And though none but a fool or madman will ever pretend to diſpute the authority of experience, or to reject that great guide of human life, it may ſurely be allowed a philoſopher to have ſo much curioſity at leaſt as to examine the principle of human nature, which gives this mighty authority to experience, and makes us draw advantage from that ſimilarity which nature has placed among different objects. From cauſes which appear ſimilar, we expect ſimilar effects. This is the ſum of all our experimental concluſions. Now, it ſeems evident, that if this concluſion were formed by reaſon, it would be as perfect at firſt, and upon one inſtance, as after ever ſo long a courſe of experience: but the caſe is far otherwiſe. Nothing ſo like as eggs; yet no one, on account of this appearing ſimilarity, expects the ſame taſte and reliſh in all of them. It is only after a long courſe of uniform experiments in any kind, that we attain a firm reliance and ſecurity with regard to a particular event. Now, where

where is that process of reasoning, which, from one instance, draws a conclusion so different from that which it infers from a hundred instances that are nowise different from that single one? This question I propose as much for the sake of information, as with an intention of raising difficulties. I cannot find, I cannot imagine, any such reasoning. But I keep my mind still open to instruction, if any one will vouchsafe to bestow it on me.

Should it be said, that, from a number of uniform experiments, we infer a connexion between the sensible qualities and the secret powers; this, I must confess, seems the same difficulty, couched in different terms. The question still recurs, on what process of argument this inference is founded? Where is the medium, the interposing ideas, which join propositions so very wide of each other? It is confessed, that the colour, consistence, and other sensible qualities of bread, appear not of themselves to have any connexion with the secret powers of nourishment and support. For otherwise we could infer these secret powers from the first appearance of these sensible qualities, without the aid of experience, contrary to the sentiment of all philosophers, and contrary to plain matter of fact. Here, then, is our natural state of ignorance with regard to the powers and influence of all objects. How is this remedied by experience? It only shows us a number of uniform effects resulting from certain objects, and teaches us, that those particular objects, at that particular time, were endowed with such powers and forces. When a new object, endowed with similar sensible qualities, is produced, we expect similar powers and forces, and look for a like effect. From a body of like colour and consistence with bread, we expect like nourishment

and ſupport.—But this ſurely is a ſtep or progreſs of the mind which wants to be explained. When a man ſays, 'I have found, in all paſt inſtances, ſuch ſenſible qualities conjoined with ſuch ſecret powers;' and when he ſays, 'ſimilar ſenſible qualities will always be conjoined with ſimilar ſecret powers,' he is not guilty of a tautology, nor are theſe propoſitions in any reſpect the ſame. You ſay that the one propoſition is an inference from the other: But you muſt confeſs, that the inference is not intuitive; neither is it demonſtrative. Of what nature is it then? To ſay it is experimental, is begging the queſtion. For all inferences from experience ſuppoſe, as their foundation, that the future will reſemble the paſt, and that ſimilar powers will be conjoined with ſimilar ſenſible qualities. If there be any ſuſpicion that the courſe of nature may change, and that the paſt may be no rule for the future, all experience becomes uſeleſs, and can give riſe to no inference or concluſion. It is impoſſible, therefore, that any arguments from experience can prove this reſemblance of the paſt to the future; ſince all theſe arguments are founded on the ſuppoſition of that reſemblance. Let the courſe of things be allowed hitherto ever ſo regular, that alone, without ſome new argument or inference, proves not, that, for the future, it will continue ſo. In vain do you pretend to have learned the nature of bodies from your paſt experience. Their ſecret nature, and conſequently all their effects and influence, may change, without any change in their ſenſible qualities. This happens ſometimes, and with regard to ſome objects: Why may it not happen always, and with regard to all objects? What logic, what proceſs of argument, ſecures you againſt this ſuppoſition? My practice, you ſay, refutes my doubts. But you miſ-

take

take the purport of my queſtion. As an agent, I am quite ſatisfied in the point; but as a philoſopher, who has ſome ſhare of curioſity, I will not ſay ſcepticiſm, I want to learn the foundation of this inference. No reading, no inquiry, has yet been able to remove my difficulty, or give me ſatisfaction in a matter of ſuch importance. Can I do better than propoſe the difficulty to the public, even though, perhaps, I have ſmall hopes of obtaining a ſolution? We ſhall at leaſt, by this means, be ſenſible of our ignorance, if we do not augment our knowledge.

I muſt confeſs, that a man is guilty of unpardonable arrogance, who concludes, becauſe an argument has eſcaped his own inveſtigation, that therefore it does not really exiſt. I muſt alſo confeſs, that though all the learned, for ſeveral ages, ſhould have employed themſelves in fruitleſs reſearches upon any ſubject, it may ſtill, perhaps, be raſh to conclude poſitively, that the ſubject muſt therefore paſs all human comprehenſion. Even though we examine all the ſources of our knowledge, and conclude them unfit for ſuch a ſubject, there may ſtill remain a ſuſpicion, that the enumeration is not complete, or the examination not accurate. But with regard to the preſent ſubject, there are ſome conſiderations which ſeem to remove all this accuſation of arrogance, or ſuſpicion of miſtake.

It is certain, that the moſt ignorant and ſtupid peaſants, nay infants, nay even brute beaſts, improve by experience, and learn the qualities of natural objects, by obſerving the effects which reſult from them. When a child has felt the ſenſation of pain from touching the flame of a candle, he will be careful not to put his hand near any candle, but will expect a ſimilar effect from a cauſe, which is ſimilar in its ſenſible qualities

and appearance. If you aſſert, therefore, that the underſtanding of the child is led into this concluſion by any proceſs of argument or ratiocination, I may juſtly require you to produce that argument; nor have you any pretence to refuſe ſo equitable a demand. You cannot ſay, that the argument is abſtruſe, and may poſſibly eſcape your inquiry; ſince you confeſs, that it is obvious to the capacity of a mere infant. If you heſitate therefore a moment, or if, after reflection, you produce any intricate or profound argument, you, in a manner, give up the queſtion, and confeſs, that it is not reaſoning which engages us to ſuppoſe the paſt reſembling the future, and to expect ſimilar effects from cauſes, which are, to appearance, ſimilar. This is the propoſition which I intended to inforce in the preſent ſection. If I be right, I pretend not to have made any mighty diſcovery: And if I be wrong, I muſt acknowledge myſelf to be indeed a very backward ſcholar; ſince I cannot now diſcover an argument, which, it ſeems, was perfectly familiar to me long before I was out of my cradle.

SECTION V.

Sceptical Solution of theſe Doubts.

PART I.

THE paſſion for philoſophy, like that for religion, ſeems liable to this inconvenience, that though it aims at the correction of our manners, and extirpation

tion of our vices, it may only ſerve, by imprudent management, to foſter a predominant inclination, and puſh the mind with more determined reſolution, towards that ſide which already draws too much, by the bias and propenſity of the natural temper. It is certain, that, while we aſpire to the magnanimous firmneſs of the philoſophic ſage, and endeavour to confine our pleaſures altogether within our own minds, we may, at laſt, render our philoſophy, like that of Epictetus and other Stoics, only a more refined ſyſtem of ſelfiſhneſs, and reaſon ourſelves out of all virtue as well as ſocial enjoyment. While we ſtudy with attention the vanity of human life, and turn all our thoughts towards the empty and tranſitory nature of riches and honours, we are, perhaps, all the while flattering our natural indolence, which, hating the buſtle of the world and drudgery of buſineſs, ſeeks a pretence of reaſon to give itſelf a full and uncontrouled indulgence. There is, however, one ſpecies of philoſophy which ſeems little liable to this inconvenience, and that becauſe it ſtrikes in with no diſorderly paſſion of the human mind, nor can mingle itſelf with any natural affection or propenſity; and that is the Academic or Sceptical philoſophy. The academics always talk of doubt and ſuſpence of judgment, of danger in haſty determinations, of confining to very narrow bounds the inquiries of the underſtanding, and of renouncing all ſpeculations which lie not within the limits of common life and practice. Nothing, therefore, can be more contrary than ſuch a philoſophy to the ſupine indolence of the mind, its raſh arrogance, its lofty pretenſions, and its ſuperſtitious credulity. Every paſſion is mortified by it, except the love of truth; and that paſſion never is, nor can be, carried to too high a degree. It is ſurpriſing, therefore, that this philoſophy which, in almoſt every in-

ſtance, muſt be harmleſs and innocent, ſhould be the ſubject of ſo much groundleſs reproach and obloquy. But, perhaps, the very circumſtance which renders it ſo innocent, is what chiefly expoſes it to the public hatred and reſentment. By flattering no irregular paſſion, it gains few partizans: by oppoſing ſo many vices and follies, it raiſes to itſelf abundance of enemies, who ſtigmatize it as libertine, profane, and irreligious.

Nor need we fear, that this philoſophy, while it endeavours to limit our inquiries to common life, ſhould ever undermine the reaſonings of common life, and carry its doubts ſo far as to deſtroy all action as well as ſpeculation. Nature will always maintain her rights, and prevail in the end over any abſtract reaſoning whatſoever. Though we ſhould conclude, for inſtance, as in the foregoing ſection, that, in all reaſonings from experience, there is a ſtep taken by the mind, which is not ſupported by any argument or proceſs of the underſtanding; there is no danger that theſe reaſonings, on which almoſt all knowledge depends, will ever be affected by ſuch a diſcovery. If the mind be not engaged by argument to make this ſtep, it muſt be induced by ſome other principle of equal weight and authority; and that principle will preſerve its influence as long as human nature remains the ſame. What that principle is, may well be worth the pains of inquiry.

Suppoſe a perſon, though endowed with the ſtrongeſt faculties of reaſon and reflection, to be brought on a ſudden into this world; he would, indeed, immediately obſerve a continual ſucceſſion of objects, and one event following another; but he would not be able to diſcover any thing farther. He would not, at firſt, by any reaſoning, be able to reach the idea of cauſe and effect; ſince the particular powers, by which all natural

tural operations are performed, never appear to the ſenſes; nor is it reaſonable to conclude, merely becauſe one event in one inſtance precedes another, that therefore the one is the cauſe, the other the effect. Their conjunction may be arbitrary and caſual. There may be no reaſon to infer the exiſtence of one from the appearance of the other; And in a word, ſuch a perſon, without more experience, could never employ his conjecture or reaſoning concerning any matter of fact, or be aſſured of any thing beyond what was immediately preſent to his memory and ſenſes.

Suppoſe, again, that he has acquired more experience, and has lived ſo long in the world as to have obſerved ſimilar objects or events to be conſtantly conjoined together; what is the conſequence of this experience? He immediately infers the exiſtence of one object from the appearance of the other: Yet he has not, by all his experience, acquired any idea or knowledge of the ſecret power, by which the one object produces the other; nor is it, by any proceſs of reaſoning, he is engaged to draw this inference; but ſtill he finds himſelf determined to draw it; and though he ſhould be convinced that his underſtanding has no part in the operation, he would nevertheleſs continue in the ſame courſe of thinking. There is ſome other principle which determines him to form ſuch a concluſion.

This principle is Cuſtom or Habit. For wherever the repetition of any particular act or operation produces a propenſity to renew the ſame act or operation, without being impelled by any reaſoning or proceſs of the underſtanding, we always ſay, that this propenſity is the effect of Cuſtom. By employing that word, we pretend not to have given the ultimate reaſon of ſuch a propenſity. We only point out a principle of human

man nature which is univerſally acknowledged, and which is well known by its effects. Perhaps we can puſh our inquiries no farther, or pretend to give the cauſe of this cauſe; but muſt reſt contented with it as the ultimate principle, which we can aſſign, of all our concluſions from experience. It is ſufficient ſatisfaction, that we can go ſo far, without repining at the narrowneſs of our faculties; becauſe they will carry us no farther. And it is certain we here advance a very intelligible propoſition at leaſt, if not a true one, when we aſſert, that, after the conſtant conjunction of two objects, heat and flame, for inſtance, weight and ſolidity, we are determined by cuſtom alone to expect the one from the appearance of the other. This hypotheſis ſeems even the only one which explains the difficulty, why we draw, from a thouſand inſtances, an inference which we are not able to draw from one inſtance that is, in no reſpect, different from them. Reaſon is incapable of any ſuch variation. The concluſions which it draws from conſidering one circle, are the ſame which it would form upon ſurveying all the circles in the univerſe. But no man, having ſeen only one body move after being impelled by another, could infer, that every other body will move after a like impulſe. All inferences from experience, therefore, are effects of cuſtom, not of reaſoning *.

Cuſtom, then, is the great guide of human life. It is that principle alone which renders our experience uſeful to us, and makes us expect, for the future, a ſimilar train of events with thoſe which have appeared in the paſt. Without the influence of cuſtom, we ſhould be entirely ignorant of every matter of fact, beyond what is immediately preſent to the memory and ſenſes.

* See NOTE [B].

ſenſes. We ſhould never know how to adjuſt means to ends, or to employ our natural powers in the production of any effect. There would be an end at once of all action as well as of the chief part of ſpeculation.

But here it may be proper to remark, that though our concluſions from experience carry us beyond our memory and ſenſes, and aſſure us of matters of fact which happened in the moſt diſtant places and moſt remote ages; yet ſome fact muſt always be preſent to the ſenſes or memory, from which we may firſt proceed in drawing theſe concluſions. A man, who ſhould find in a deſart country the remains of pompous buildings, would conclude, that the country had in ancient times been cultivated by civilized inhabitants; but, did nothing of this nature occur to him, he could never form ſuch an inference. We learn the events of former ages from hiſtory; but then we muſt peruſe the volumes in which this inſtruction is contained, and thence carry up our inferences from one teſtimony to another, till we arrive at the eye-witneſſes and ſpectators of theſe diſtant events. In a word, if we proceed not upon ſome fact preſent to the memory or ſenſes, our reaſonings would be merely hypothetical; and however the particular links might be connected with each other, the whole chain of inferences would have nothing to ſupport it, nor could we ever by its means arrive at the knowledge of any real exiſtence. If I aſk, why you believe any particular matter of fact which you relate, you muſt tell me ſome reaſon; and this reaſon will be ſome other fact connected with it. But as you cannot proceed after this manner *in infinitum*, you muſt at leaſt terminate in ſome fact which is preſent to your memory or ſenſes;

ſenſes; or muſt allow that your belief is entirely without foundation.

What then is the concluſion of the whole matter? A ſimple one; though it muſt be confeſſed, pretty remote from the common theories of philoſophy. All belief of matter of fact or real exiſtence, is derived merely from ſome object preſent to the memory or ſenſes, and a cuſtomary conjunction between that and ſome other object: Or, in other words, having found, in many inſtances, that any two kinds of objects, flame and heat, ſnow and cold, have always been conjoined together; if flame or ſnow be preſented anew to the ſenſes, the mind is carried by cuſtom to expect heat or cold, and to believe, that ſuch a quality does exiſt, and will diſcover itſelf upon a nearer approach. This belief is the neceſſary reſult of placing the mind in ſuch circumſtances. It is an operation of the ſoul, when we are ſo ſituated, as unavoidable, as to feel the paſſion of love, when we receive benefits; or hatred, when we meet with injuries. All theſe operations are a ſpecies of natural inſtincts, which no reaſoning or proceſs of the thought and underſtanding is able either to produce or to prevent.

At this point, it would be very allowable for us to ſtop our philoſophical reſearches. In moſt queſtions we can never make a ſingle ſtep farther; and in all queſtions, we muſt terminate here at laſt, after our moſt reſtleſs and curious inquiries. But ſtill our curioſity will be pardonable, perhaps commendable, if it carry us on to ſtill farther reſearches, and make us examine more accurately the nature of this belief, and of the cuſtomary conjunction, whence it is derived. By this means we may meet with ſome explications and analogies that will give ſatisfaction, at leaſt to ſuch as

love

love the abſtract ſciences, and can be entertained with ſpeculations which, however accurate, may ſtill retain a degree of doubt and uncertainty. As to readers of a different taſte, the remaining part of this ſection is not calculated for them; and the following inquiries may well be underſtood, though it be neglected.

PART II.

NOTHING is more free than the imagination of man; and though it cannot exceed that original ſtock of ideas, furniſhed by the internal and external ſenſes, it has unlimited power of mixing, compounding, ſeparating, and dividing theſe ideas, in all the varieties of fiction and viſion. It can feign a train of events with all the appearance of reality, aſcribe to them a particular time and place, conceive them as exiſtent, and paint them out to itſelf with every circumſtance that belongs to any hiſtorical fact, which it believes with the greateſt certainty. Wherein, therefore, conſiſts the difference between ſuch a fiction and belief? It lies not merely in any peculiar idea which is annexed to ſuch a conception as commands our aſſent, and which is wanting to every known fiction. For as the mind has authority over all its ideas, it could voluntarily annex this particular idea to any fiction, and conſequently be able to believe whatever it pleaſes, contrary to what we find by daily experience. We can, in our conception, join the head of a man to the body of a horſe; but it is not in our power to believe, that ſuch an animal has ever really exiſted.

It follows, therefore, that the difference between fiction and belief lies in ſome ſentiment or feeling which

which is annexed to the latter, not to the former, and which depends not on the will, nor can be commanded at pleaſure. It muſt be excited by nature like all other ſentiments, and muſt ariſe from the particular ſituation in which the mind is placed at any particular juncture. Whenever any object is preſented to the memory or ſenſes, it immediately, by the force of cuſtom, carries the imagination to conceive that object which is uſually conjoined to it; and this conception is attended with a feeling or ſentiment different from the looſe reveries of the fancy. In this conſiſts the whole nature of belief. For as there is no matter of fact which we believe ſo firmly, that we cannot conceive the contrary, there would be no difference between the conception aſſented to, and that which is rejected, were it not for ſome ſentiment which diſtinguiſhes the one from the other. If I ſee a billiard-ball moving towards another on a ſmooth table, I can eaſily conceive it to ſtop upon contact. This conception implies no contradiction; but ſtill it feels very differently from that conception by which I repreſent to myſelf the impulſe and the communication of motion from one ball to another.

Were we to attempt a definition of this ſentiment, we ſhould, perhaps, find it a very difficult, if not an impoſſible taſk; in the ſame manner as if we ſhould endeavour to define the feeling of cold, or paſſion of anger, to a creature who never had any experience of theſe ſentiments. Belief is the true and proper name of this feeling; and no one is ever at a loſs to know the meaning of that term; becauſe every man is every moment conſcious of the ſentiment repreſented by it. It may not, however, be improper to attempt a deſcription of this ſentiment; in hopes we may, by that means, arrive at ſome analogies which may afford a more

more perfect explication of it. I ſay then, that belief is nothing but a more vivid, lively, forcible, firm, ſteady conception of an object, than what the imagination alone is ever able to attain. This variety of terms, which may ſeem ſo unphiloſophical, is intended only to expreſs that act of the mind which renders realities, or what is taken for ſuch, more preſent to us than fictions, cauſes them to weigh more in the thought, and gives them a ſuperior influence on the paſſions and imagination. Provided we agree about the thing, it is needleſs to diſpute about the terms. The imagination has the command over all its ideas, and can join, and mix, and vary them, in all the ways poſſible. It may conceive fictitious objects with all the circumſtances of place and time. It may ſet them, in a manner, before our eyes, in their true colours, juſt as they might have exiſted. But as it is impoſſible, that this faculty of imagination can ever, of itſelf, reach belief, it is evident, that belief conſiſts not in the peculiar nature or order of ideas, but in the manner of their conception, and in their feeling to the mind. I confeſs, that it is impoſſible perfectly to explain this feeling or manner of conception. We may make uſe of words which expreſs ſomething near it. But its true and proper name, as we obſerved before, is Belief; which is a term that every one ſufficiently underſtands in common life. And in philoſophy, we can go no farther than aſſert, that Belief is ſomething felt by the mind, which diſtinguiſhes the ideas of the judgment from the fictions of the imagination. It gives them more weight and influence; makes them appear of greater importance; enforces them in the mind; and renders them the governing principle of our actions. I hear at preſent, for inſtance, a perſon's voice, with whom I am acquainted;

quainted; and the ſound comes as from the next room. This impreſſion of my ſenſes immediately conveys my thought to the perſon, together with all the ſurrounding objects. I paint them out to myſelf as exiſting at preſent, with the ſame qualities and relations of which I formerly knew them poſſeſſed. Theſe ideas take faſter hold of my mind than ideas of an enchanted caſtle. They are very different to the feeling, and have a much greater influence of every kind, either to give pleaſure or pain, joy or ſorrow.

Let us, then, take in the whole compaſs of this doctrine, and allow, that the ſentiment of belief is nothing but a conception more intenſe and ſteady than what attends the mere fictions of the imagination, and that this manner of conception ariſes from a cuſtomary conjunction of the object with ſomething preſent to the memory or ſenſes: I believe that it will not be difficult, upon theſe ſuppoſitions, to find other operations of the mind analagous to it, and to trace up theſe phænomena to principles ſtill more general.

We have already obſerved, that nature has eſtabliſhed connexions among particular ideas, and that no ſooner one idea occurs to our thoughts than it introduces its correlative, and carries our attention towards it, by a gentle and inſenſible movement. Theſe principles of connection or aſſociation we have reduced to three, namely, Reſemblance, Contiguity, and Cauſation; which are the only bonds that unite our thoughts together, and beget that regular train of reflection or diſcourſe, which, in a greater or leſs degree, takes place among all mankind. Now, here ariſes a queſtion, on which the ſolution of the preſent difficulty will depend. Does it happen in all theſe relations, that, when one of the objects is preſented to the ſenſes or memory, the

the mind is not only carried to the conception of the correlative, but reaches a ſteadier and ſtronger conception of it than what otherwiſe it would have been able to attain? This ſeems to be the caſe with that belief which ariſes from the relation of cauſe and effect. And if the caſe be the ſame with the other relations or principles of aſſociation, this may be eſtabliſhed as a general law, which takes place in all the operations of the mind.

We may, therefore, obſerve, as the firſt experiment to our preſent purpoſe, that, upon the appearance of the picture of an abſent friend, our idea of him is evidently enlivened by the reſemblance; and that every paſſion, which that idea occaſions, whether of joy or ſorrow, acquires new force and vigour. In producing this effect, there concur both a relation and a preſent impreſſion. Where the picture bears him no reſemblance, at leaſt was not intended for him, it never ſo much as conveys our thought to him: And where it is abſent, as well as the perſon; though the mind may paſs from the thought of one to that of the other; it feels its idea to be rather weakened than enlivened by that tranſition. We take a pleaſure in viewing the picture of a friend when it is ſet before us; but when it is removed, rather chooſe to conſider him directly, than by reflection in an image which is equally diſtant and obſcure.

The ceremonies of the Roman Catholic religion may be conſidered as inſtances of the ſame nature. The devotees of that ſuperſtition uſually plead, in excuſe for the mummeries with which they are upbraided, that they feel the good effect of thoſe external motions, and poſtures, and actions, in enlivening their devotion, and quickening their fervour, which other-

wiſe would decay, if directed entirely to diſtant and immaterial objects. We ſhadow out the objects of our faith, ſay they, in ſenſible types and images, and render them more preſent to us by the immediate preſence of theſe types, than it is poſſible for us to do, merely by an intellectual view and contemplation. Senſible objects have always a greater influence on the fancy than any other; and this influence they readily convey to thoſe ideas, to which they are related, and which they reſemble. I ſhall only infer from theſe practices, and this reaſoning, that the effect of reſemblance in enlivening the ideas, is very common; and as in every caſe a reſemblance and a preſent impreſſion muſt concur, we are abundantly ſupplied with experiments to prove the reality of the foregoing principle.

We may add force to theſe experiments by others of a different kind, in conſidering the effects of Contiguity, as well as of Reſemblance. It is certain, that diſtance diminiſhes the force of every idea, and that, upon our approach to any object, though it does not diſcover itſelf to our ſenſes, it operates upon the mind with an influence, which intimates an immediate impreſſion. The thinking on any object readily tranſports the mind to what is contiguous; but it is only the actual preſence of an object, that tranſports it with a ſuperior vivacity. When I am a few miles from home, whatever relates to it touches me more nearly than when I am two hundred leagues diſtant; though, even at that diſtance, the reflecting on any thing in the neighbourhood of my friends or family naturally produces an idea of them. But as, in this latter caſe, both the objects of the mind are ideas; notwithſtanding there is an eaſy tranſition between them; that tranſition

tion alone is not able to give a ſuperior vivacity to any of the ideas, for want of ſome immediate impreſſion *.

No one can doubt but cauſation has the ſame influence as the other two relations of reſemblance and contiguity. Superſtitious people are fond of the reliques of ſaints and holy men, for the ſame reaſon that they ſeek after types or images, in order to enliven their devotion, and give them a more intimate and ſtrong conception of thoſe exemplary lives which they deſire to imitate. Now, it is evident, that one of the beſt reliques which a devotee could procure, would be the handywork of a ſaint; and if his clothes and furniture are ever to be conſidered in this light, it is becauſe they were once at his diſpoſal, and were moved and affected by him; in which reſpect they are to be conſidered as imperfect effects, and as connected with him by a ſhorter chain of conſequences, than any of thoſe by which we learn the reality of his exiſtence.

Suppoſe that the ſon of a friend who had been long dead or abſent, were preſented to us; it is evident, that this object would inſtantly revive its correlative

* "Naturane nobis, inquit, datum dicam, an errore quodam, ut, "cùm ea loca videamus, in quibus memoria dignos viros acceperimus "multum eſſe verſatos, magis moveamur, quam ſiquando eorum "ipſorum aut facta audiamus aut ſcriptum aliquod legamus? Velut "ego nunc moveor. Venit enim mihi PLATONIS in mentem, quem "accepimus primum hic diſputare ſolitum: Cujus etiam illi hortuli "propinqui non memoriam ſolum mihi afferunt, ſed ipſum videntur "in conſpectu meo hic ponere. Hic SPEUSIPPUS, hic XENOCRATES, hic ejus auditor POLEMO; cujus ipſa illa ſeſſio fuit, quam "videamus. Equidem etiam curiam noſtram, HOSTILIAM dico, non "hanc novam, quæ mihi minor eſſe videtur poſtquam eſt major, ſolebam intuens, SCIPIONEM, CATONEM, LÆLIUM, noſtrum verò "in primis avum cogitare. Tanta vis admonitionis eſt in locis; ut "non ſine cauſa ex his memoriæ deducta ſit diſciplina." CICERO *de Finibus*, Lib. v.

idea, and recal to our thoughts all paſt intimacies and familiarities, in more lively colours than they would otherwiſe have appeared to us. This is another phænomenon, which ſeems to prove the principle above mentioned.

We may obſerve, that, in theſe phænomena, the belief of the correlative object is always preſuppoſed; without which the relation could have no effect. The influence of the picture ſuppoſes, that we believe our friend to have once exiſted. Contiguity to home can never excite our ideas of home, unleſs we believe that it really exiſts. Now, I aſſert, that this belief, where it reaches beyond the memory or ſenſes, is of a ſimilar nature, and ariſes from ſimilar cauſes, with the tranſition of thought and vivacity of conception here explained. When I throw a piece of dry wood into a fire, my mind is immediately carried to conceive, that it augments, not extinguiſhes, the flame. This tranſition of thought from the cauſe to the effect, proceeds not from reaſon. It derives its origin altogether from cuſtom and experience. And as it firſt begins from an object, preſent to the ſenſes, it renders the idea or conception of flame more ſtrong and lively than any looſe, floating reverie of the imagination. That idea ariſes immediately. The thought moves inſtantly towards it, and conveys to it all that force of conception which is derived from the impreſſion preſent to the ſenſes. When a ſword is levelled at my breaſt, does not the idea of wound and pain ſtrike me more ſtrongly, than when a glaſs of wine is preſented to me, even though by accident this idea ſhould occur after the appearance of the latter object? But what is there in this whole matter to cauſe ſuch a ſtrong conception, except only a preſent object and a cuſtomary tranſition

to

to the idea of another object, which we have been accuſtomed to conjoin with the former? This is the whole operation of the mind, in all our concluſions concerning matter of fact and exiſtence; and it is a ſatisfaction to find ſome analogies, by which it may be explained. The tranſition from a preſent object does in all caſes give ſtrength and ſolidity to the related idea.

Here, then, is a kind of pre-eſtabliſhed harmony between the courſe of nature and the ſucceſſion of our ideas; and though the powers and forces, by which the former is governed, be wholly unknown to us; yet our thoughts and conceptions have ſtill, we find, gone on in the ſame train with the other works of nature. Cuſtom is that principle by which this correſpondence has been effected; ſo neceſſary to the ſubſiſtence of our ſpecies, and the regulation of our conduct, in every circumſtance and occurrence of human life. Had not the preſence of an object inſtantly excited the idea of thoſe objects commonly conjoined with it, all our knowledge muſt have been limited to the narrow ſphere of our memory and ſenſes; and we ſhould never have been able to adjuſt means to ends, or employ our natural powers, either to the producing of good, or avoiding of evil. Thoſe who delight in the diſcovery and contemplation of final cauſes, have here ample ſubject to employ their wonder and admiration.

I ſhall add, for a further confirmation of the foregoing theory, that, as this operation of the mind, by which we infer like effects from like cauſes, and *vice verſa*, is ſo eſſential to the ſubſiſtence of all human creatures, it is not probable, that it could be truſted to the fallacious deductions of our reaſon,

which is ſlow in its operations; appears not, in any degree, during the firſt years of infancy; and at beſt is, in every age and period of human life, extremely liable to error and miſtake. It is more conformable to the ordinary wiſdom of nature to ſecure ſo neceſſary an act of the mind, by ſome inſtinct or mechanical tendency, which may be infallible in its operations, may diſcover itſelf at the firſt appearance of life and thought, and may be independent of all the laboured deductions of the underſtanding. As nature has taught us the uſe of our limbs, without giving us the knowledge of the muſcles and nerves by which they are actuated; ſo has ſhe implanted in us an inſtinct, which carries forward the thought in a correſpondent courſe to that which ſhe has eſtabliſhed among external objects; though we are ignorant of thoſe powers and forces on which this regular courſe and ſucceſſion of objects totally depends.

SECTION VI.

Of Probability *.

THOUGH there be no ſuch thing as Chance in the world, our ignorance of the real cauſe of any event has the ſame influence on the underſtanding, and begets a like ſpecies of belief or opinion.

There

* Mr Locke divides all arguments into demonſtrative and probable. In this view, we muſt ſay, that it is only probable all men muſt die, or that the ſun will riſe to-morrow. But to conform our language more to common uſe, we ought to divide arguments into demonſtrations, proofs, and probabilities. By proofs, meaning ſuch arguments from experience as leave no room for doubt or oppoſition.

There is certainly a probability, which ariſes from a ſuperiority of chances on any ſide; and according as this ſuperiority increaſes, and ſurpaſſes the oppoſite chances, the probability receives a proportionable increaſe, and begets ſtill a higher degree of belief or aſſent to that ſide in which we diſcover the ſuperiority. If a dye were marked with one figure or number of ſpots on four ſides, and with another figure or number of ſpots on the two remaining ſides, it would be more probable, that the former would turn up than the latter; though, if it had a thouſand ſides marked in the ſame manner, and only one ſide different, the probability would be much higher, and our belief or expectation of the event more ſteady and ſecure. This proceſs of the thought or reaſoning may ſeem trivial and obvious; but to thoſe who conſider it more narrowly, it may, perhaps, afford matter for curious ſpeculation.

It ſeems evident, that, when the mind looks forward to diſcover the event which may reſult from the throw of ſuch a dye, it conſiders the turning up of each particular ſide as alike probable; and this is the very nature of chance, to render all the particular events, comprehended in it, entirely equal. But finding a greater number of ſides concur in the one event than in the other, the mind is carried more frequently to that event, and meets it oftener, in revolving the various poſſibilities or chances, on which the ultimate reſult depends. This concurrence of ſeveral views in one particular event, begets immediately, by an inexplicable contrivance of nature, the ſentiment of belief, and gives that event the advantage over its antagoniſt, which is ſupported by a ſmaller number of views, and recurs leſs frequently to the mind. If we

allow, that belief is nothing but a firmer and ſtronger conception of an object than what attends the mere fictions of the imagination, this operation may, perhaps, in ſome meaſure, be accounted for. The concurrence of theſe ſeveral views or glimpſes imprints the idea more ſtrongly on the imagination; gives it ſuperior force and vigour; renders its influence on the paſſions and affections more ſenſible; and in a word, begets that reliance or ſecurity, which conſtitutes the nature of belief and opinion.

The caſe is the ſame with the probability of cauſes, as with that of chance. There are ſome cauſes which are entirely uniform and conſtant in producing a particular effect; and no inſtance has ever yet been found of any failure or irregularity in their operation. Fire has always burned, and water ſuffocated, every human creature: The production of motion by impulſe and gravity is an univerſal law, which has hitherto admitted of no exception. But there are other cauſes, which have been found more irregular and uncertain; nor has rhubarb always proved a purge, or opium a ſoporific, to every one who has taken theſe medicines. It is true, when any cauſe fails of producing its uſual effect, philoſophers aſcribe not this to any irregularity in nature; but ſuppoſe, that ſome ſecret cauſes, in the particular ſtructure of parts, have prevented the operation. Our reaſonings, however, and concluſions concerning the event, are the ſame as if this principle had no place. Being determined by cuſtom to tranſfer the paſt to the future, in all our inferences; where the paſt has been entirely regular and uniform, we expect the event with the greateſt aſſurance, and leave no room for any contrary ſuppoſition. But where different effects have been found to follow from cauſes, which are to appearance exactly ſimilar, all theſe various

ous effects muſt occur to the mind in transferring the paſt to the future, and enter into our conſideration, when we determine the probability of the event. Though we give the preference to that which has been found moſt uſual, and believe that this effect will exiſt, we muſt not overlook the other effects, but muſt aſſign to each of them a particular weight and authority, in proportion as we have found it to be more or leſs frequent. It is more probable, in almoſt every country of Europe, that there will be froſt ſome time in January, than that the weather will continue open throughout that whole month; though this probability varies according to the different climates, and approaches to a certainty in the more northern kingdoms. Here then it ſeems evident, that, when we transfer the paſt to the future, in order to determine the effect which will reſult from any cauſe, we transfer all the different events, in the ſame proportion as they have appeared in the paſt, and conceive one to have exiſted a hundred times, for inſtance, another ten times, and another once. As a great number of views do here concur in one event, they fortify and confirm it to the imagination, beget that ſentiment which we call Belief, and give its object the preference above the contrary event, which is not ſupported by an equal number of experiments, and recurs not ſo frequently to the thought in transferring the paſt to the future. Let any one try to account for this operation of the mind, upon any of the received ſyſtems of philoſophy, and he will be ſenſible of the difficulty. For my part, I ſhall think it ſufficient, if the preſent hints excite the curioſity of philoſophers, and make them ſenſible how defective all common theories are in treating of ſuch curious and ſuch ſublime ſubjects.

SEC.

SECTION VII.

Of the Idea of Neceſſary Connexion.

PART I.

THE great advantage of the mathematical ſciences above the moral, conſiſts in this, that the ideas of the former, being ſenſible, are always clear and determinate: the ſmalleſt diſtinction between them is immediately perceptible, and the ſame terms are ſtill expreſſive of the ſame ideas, without ambiguity or variation. An oval is never miſtaken for a circle, nor an hyperbola for an ellipſis. The iſoſceles and ſcalenum are diſtinguiſhed by boundaries more exact than vice and virtue, right and wrong. If any term be defined in geometry, the mind readily, of itſelf, ſubſtitutes, on all occaſions, the definition for the term defined: Or, even when no definition is employed, the object itſelf may be preſented to the ſenſes, and by that means be ſteadily and clearly apprehended. But the finer ſentiments of the mind, the operations of the underſtanding, the various agitations of the paſſions, though really in themſelves diſtinct, eaſily eſcape us, when ſurveyed by reflection; nor is it in our power to recal the original object, as often as we have occaſion to contemplate it. Ambiguity, by this means, is gradually introduced into our reaſonings: Similar objects are readily taken to be the ſame: And the concluſion becomes at laſt very wide of the premiſes.

One

One may ſafely, however, affirm, that, if we conſider theſe ſciences in a proper light, their advantages and diſadvantages nearly compenſate each other, and reduce both of them to a ſtate of equality. If the mind, with greater facility, retains the ideas of geometry clear and determinate, it muſt carry on a much longer and more intricate chain of reaſoning, and compare ideas much wider of each other, in order to reach the abſtruſer truths of that ſcience. And if moral ideas are apt, without extreme care, to fall into obſcurity and confuſion, the inferences are always much ſhorter in theſe diſquiſitions, and the intermediate ſteps, which lead to the concluſion, much fewer, than in the ſciences which treat of quantity and number. In reality, there is ſcarcely a propoſition in Euclid ſo ſimple, as not to conſiſt of more parts, than are to be found in any moral reaſoning which runs not into chimera and conceit. Where we trace the principles of the human mind through but a few ſteps, we may be very well ſatisfied with our progreſs; conſidering how ſoon nature throws a bar to all our inquiries concerning cauſes, and reduces us to an acknowledgment of our ignorance. The chief obſtacle, therefore, to our improvement in the moral or metaphyſical ſciences, is the obſcurity of the ideas, and ambiguity of the terms. The principal difficulty in the mathematics, is the length of inferences and compaſs of thought, requiſite to the forming of any concluſion. And, perhaps, our progreſs in natural philoſophy is chiefly retarded by the want of proper experiments and phænomena, which are often diſcovered by chance, and cannot always be found, when requiſite, even by the moſt diligent and prudent inquiry. As moral philoſophy ſeems hitherto to have received leſs improvement than either geometry

try

try or phyſics, we may conclude, that if there be any difference in this reſpect among theſe ſciences, the difficulties, which obſtruct the progreſs of the former, require ſuperior care and capacity to be ſurmounted.

There are no ideas, which occur in metaphyſics, more obſcure and uncertain, than thoſe of power, force, energy, or neceſſary connection; of which it is every moment neceſſary for us to treat in all our diſquiſitions. We ſhall, therefore, endeavour, in this ſection, to fix, if poſſible, the preciſe meaning of theſe terms, and thereby remove ſome part of that obſcurity which is ſo much complained of in this ſpecies of philoſophy.

It ſeems a propoſition, which will not admit of much diſpute, that all our ideas are nothing but copies of our impreſſions; or, in other words, that it is impoſſible for us to think of any thing, which we have not antecedently felt, either by our external or internal ſenſes. I have endeavoured * to explain and prove this propoſition, and have expreſſed my hopes, that, by a proper application of it, men may reach a greater clearneſs and preciſion in philoſophical reaſonings, than what they have hitherto been able to attain. Complex ideas may, perhaps, be well known by definition, which is nothing but an enumeration of thoſe parts or ſimple ideas that compoſe them. But when we have puſhed up definitions to the moſt ſimple ideas, and find ſtill ſome ambiguity and obſcurity, what reſource are we then poſſeſſed of? By what invention can we throw light upon theſe ideas, and render them altogether preciſe and determinate to our intellectual view? Produce the impreſſions or original ſentiments from which the ideas are copied. Theſe impreſſions are all ſtrong and ſenſible.

* Section II.

ſenſible. They admit not of ambiguity. They are not only placed in a full light themſelves, but may throw light on their correſpondent ideas, which lie in obſcurity. And by this means we may, perhaps, attain a new microſcope or ſpecies of optics, by which, in the moral ſciences, the moſt minute and moſt ſimple ideas may be ſo enlarged as to fall readily under our apprehenſion, and be equally known with the groſſeſt and moſt ſenſible ideas that can be the object of our inquiry.

To be fully acquainted, therefore, with the idea of Power or Neceſſary Connexion, let us examine its impreſſion; and, in order to find the impreſſion with greater certainty, let us ſearch for it in all the ſources from which it may poſſibly be derived.

When we look about us towards external objects, and conſider the operation of cauſes, we are never able, in a ſingle inſtance, to diſcover any power or neceſſary connexion; any quality which binds the effect to the cauſe, and renders the one an infallible conſequence of the other. We only find, that the one does actually in fact follow the other. The impulſe of one billiard-ball is attended with motion in the ſecond. This is the whole that appears to the outward ſenſes. The mind feels no ſentiment or inward impreſſion from this ſucceſſion of objects: conſequently there is not, in any ſingle particular inſtance of cauſe and effect, any thing which can ſuggeſt the idea of power or neceſſary connexion.

From the firſt appearance of an object, we never can conjecture what effect will reſult from it. But were the power or energy of any cauſe diſcoverable by the mind, we could foreſee the effect, even without experience, and might, at firſt, pronounce with certainty

ty concerning it, by the mere dint of thought and reaſoning.

In reality, there is no part of matter that does ever, by its ſenſible qualities, diſcover any power or energy, or give us ground to imagine, that it could produce any thing, or be followed by any other object, which we could denominate its effect. Solidity, extenſion, motion; theſe qualities are all complete in themſelves, and never point out any other event which may reſult from them. The ſcenes of the univerſe are continually ſhifting, and one object follows another in an uninterrupted ſucceſſion; but the power or force which actuates the whole machine, is entirely concealed from us, and never diſcovers itſelf in any of the ſenſible qualities of body. We know that, in fact, heat is a conſtant attendant of flame; but what is the connexion between them, we have no room ſo much as to conjecture or imagine. It is impoſſible, therefore, that the idea of power can be derived from the contemplation of bodies, in ſingle inſtances of their operation; becauſe no bodies ever diſcover any power which can be the original of this idea *.

Since, therefore, external objects as they appear to the ſenſes, give us no idea of power or neceſſary connexion, by their operation in particular inſtances, let us ſee whether this idea be derived from reflection on the operations of our own minds, and be copied from any

* Mr Locke, in his chapter of Power, ſays, That, finding from experience, that there are ſeveral new productions in matter, and concluding that there muſt ſomewhere be a power capable of producing them, we arrive at laſt by this reaſoning at the idea of power. But no reaſoning can ever give us a new, original, ſimple idea; as this philoſopher himſelf confeſſes. This, therefore, can never be the origin of that idea.

any internal impreſſion. It may be ſaid, that we are every moment conſcious of internal power; while we feel, that, by the ſimple command of our will, we can move the organs of our body, or direct the faculties of our mind. An act of volition produces motion in our limbs, or raiſes a new idea in our imagination. This influence of the will we know by conſciouſneſs. Hence we acquire the idea of power or energy, and are certain, that we ourſelves and all other intelligent beings are poſſeſſed of power. This idea, then, is an idea of reflection, ſince it ariſes from reflecting on the operations of our own mind, and on the command which is exerciſed by will, both over the organs of the body and faculties of the ſoul.

We ſhall proceed to examine this pretenſion; and firſt, with regard to the influence of volition over the organs of the body. This influence, we may obſerve, is a fact which, like all other natural events, can be known only by experience, and can never be foreſeen from any apparent energy or power in the cauſe which connects it with the effect, and renders the one an infallible conſequence of the other. The motion of our body follows upon the command of our will. Of this we are every moment conſcious. But the means by which this is effected; the energy by which the will performs ſo extraordinary an operation: of this we are ſo far from being immediately conſcious, that it muſt for ever eſcape our moſt diligent inquiry.

For, *firſt*, Is there any principle in all nature more myſterious than the union of ſoul with body; by which a ſuppoſed ſpiritual ſubſtance acquires ſuch an influence over a material one, that the moſt refined thought is able to actuate the groſſeſt matter? Were we empowered, by a ſecret wiſh, to remove mountains,

or

or controul the planets in their orbit; this extenſive authority would not be more extraordinary, nor more beyond our comprehenſion. But if, by conſciouſneſs, we perceived any power or energy in the will, we muſt know this power; we muſt know its connexion with the effect; we muſt know the ſecret union of ſoul and body, and the nature of both theſe ſubſtances; by which the one is able to operate, in ſo many inſtances, upon the other.

Secondly, We are not able to move all the organs of the body with a like authority; though we cannot aſſign any reaſon beſides experience, for ſo remarkable a difference between one and the other. Why has the will an influence over the tongue and fingers, not over the heart or liver? This queſtion would never embarraſs us, were we conſcious of a power in the former caſe, not in the latter. We ſhould then perceive, independent of experience, why the authority of will over the organs of the body is circumſcribed within ſuch particular limits. Being in that caſe fully acquainted with the power or force by which it operates, we ſhould alſo know why its influence reaches preciſely to ſuch boundaries, and no farther.

A man, ſuddenly ſtruck with a palſy in the leg or arm, or who had newly loſt thoſe members, frequently endeavours, at firſt, to move them, and employ them in their uſual offices. Here he is as much conſcious of power to command ſuch limbs, as a man in perfect health is conſcious of power to actuate any member which remains in its natural ſtate and condition. But conſciouſneſs never deceives. Conſequently, neither in the one caſe nor in the other, are we ever conſcious of any power. We learn the influence of our will, from experience alone. And experience only teaches us,

us, how one event conſtantly follows another; without inſtructing us in the ſecret connexion, which binds them together, and renders them inſeparable.

Thirdly, We learn from anatomy, that the immediate object of power in voluntary motion, is not the member itſelf which is moved, but certain muſcles, and nerves, and animal ſpirits, and, perhaps, ſomething ſtill more minute and more unknown, through which the motion is ſucceſſively propagated, ere it reach the member itſelf, whoſe motion is the immediate object of volition. Can there be a more certain proof, that the power by which this whole operation is performed, ſo far from being directly and fully known by an inward ſentiment or conſciouſneſs, is, to the laſt degree, myſterious and unintelligible? Here the mind wills a certain event: Immediately another event, unknown to ourſelves, and totally different from the one intended, is produced. This event produces another, equally unknown; till at laſt, through a long ſucceſſion, the deſired event is produced. But if the original power were felt, it muſt be known: were it known, its effect muſt alſo be known; ſince all power is relative to its effect. And, *vice verſa*, if the effect be not known, the power cannot be known nor felt. How indeed can we be conſcious of a power to move our limbs, when we have no ſuch power; but only that to move certain animal ſpirits, which, though they produce at laſt the motion of our limbs, yet operate in ſuch a manner as is wholly beyond our comprehenſion?

We may, therefore, conclude from the whole, I hope, without any temerity, though with aſſurance, that our idea of power is not copied from any ſentiment or conſciouſneſs of power within ourſelves, when

we give riſe to animal motion, or apply our limbs to their proper uſe and office. That their motion follows the command of the will, is a matter of common experience, like other natural events: but the power or energy by which this is effected, like that in other natural events, is unknown and inconceivable *.

Shall we then aſſert, that we are conſcious of a power or energy in our own minds, when, by an act or command of our will, we raiſe up a new idea, fix the mind to the contemplation of it, turn it on all ſides, and at laſt diſmiſs it for ſome other idea, when we think that we have ſurveyed it with ſufficient accuracy? I believe the ſame arguments will prove, that even this command of the will gives us no real idea of force or energy.

Firſt, It muſt be allowed, that, when we know a power, we know that very circumſtance in the cauſe by which it is enabled to produce the effect: for theſe are ſuppoſed to be ſynonymous. We muſt, therefore, know both the cauſe and effect, and the relation between them. But do we pretend to be acquainted with the nature of the human ſoul, and the nature of an idea; or the aptitude of the one to produce the other? This is a real creation; a production of ſomething out of nothing: which implies a power ſo great, that it may ſeem, at firſt ſight, beyond the reach of any being, leſs than infinite. At leaſt it muſt be owned, that ſuch a power is not felt, nor known, nor even conceivable by the mind. We only feel the event, namely, the exiſtence of an idea, conſequent to a command of the will: But the manner in which this operation is performed, the power by which it is produced, is entirely beyond our comprehenſion.

Secondly,

* See Note [C].

Secondly, The command of the mind over itſelf, is limited, as well as its command over the body; and theſe limits are not known by reaſon, or any acquaintance with the nature of cauſe and effect; but only by experience and obſervation, as in all other natural events, and in the operation of external objects. Our authority over our ſentiments and paſſions, is much weaker than that over our ideas; and even the latter authority is circumſcribed within very narrow boundaries. Will any one pretend to aſſign the ultimate reaſon of theſe boundaries, or ſhow why the power is deficient in one caſe, not in another?

Thirdly, This ſelf-command is very different at different times. A man in health poſſeſſes more of it, than one languiſhing with ſickneſs. We are more maſter of our thoughts in the morning, than in the evening; faſting, than after a full meal. Can we give any reaſon for theſe variations, except experience? Where then is the power of which we pretend to be conſcious? Is there not here, either in a ſpiritual or material ſubſtance, or both, ſome ſecret mechaniſm or ſtructure of parts, upon which the effect depends, and which, being entirely unknown to us, renders the power or energy of the will equally unknown and incomprehenſible?

Volition is ſurely an act of the mind, with which we are ſufficiently acquainted. Reflect upon it: conſider it on all ſides. Do you find any thing in it like this creative power, by which it raiſes from nothing a new idea, and, with a kind of Fiat, imitates the omnipotence of its Maker, if I may be allowed ſo to ſpeak, who called forth into exiſtence all the various ſcenes of nature? So far from being conſcious of this energy in the will, it requires as certain experience, as that of

which we are poſſeſſed, to convince us, that ſuch extraordinary effects do ever reſult from a ſimple act of volition.

The generality of mankind never find any difficulty in accounting for the more common and familiar operations of nature; ſuch as, the deſcent of heavy bodies, the growth of plants, the generation of animals, or the nouriſhment of bodies by food: But ſuppoſe that, in all theſe caſes, they perceive the very force or energy of the cauſe, by which it is connected with its effect, and is for ever infallible in its operation; they acquire, by long habit, ſuch a turn of mind, that, upon the appearance of the cauſe, they immediately expect with aſſurance its uſual attendant, and hardly conceive it poſſible that any other event could reſult from it. It is only on the diſcovery of extraordinary phænomena, ſuch as earthquakes, peſtilence, and prodigies of any kind, that they find themſelves at a loſs to aſſign a proper cauſe, and to explain the manner in which the effect is produced by it. It is uſual for men, in ſuch difficulties, to have recourſe to ſome inviſible intelligent principle *, as the immediate cauſe of that event, which ſurpriſes them, and which they think cannot be accounted for from the common powers of nature. But philoſophers, who carry their ſcrutiny a little farther, immediately perceive, that, even in the moſt familiar events, the energy of the cauſe is as unintelligible as in the moſt unuſual, and that we only learn by experience the frequent Conjunction of objects, without being ever able to comprehend any thing like Connexion between them. Here, then, many philoſophers think themſelves obliged by reaſon to have recourſe, on all occaſions, to the ſame principle, which the vulgar

* Θεος απο μηχανης.

gar never appeal to but in caſes that appear miraculous and ſupernatural. They acknowledge mind and intelligence to be, not only the ultimate and original cauſe of all things, but the immediate and ſole cauſe of every event which appears in nature. They pretend, that thoſe objects, which are commonly denominated Cauſes, are, in reality, nothing but Occaſions; and that the true and direct principle of every effect, is not any power or force in nature, but a volition of the Supreme Being, who wills, that ſuch particular objects ſhould for ever be conjoined with each other. Inſtead of ſaying, that one billiard-ball moves another, by a force which it has derived from the Author of nature; it is the Deity himſelf, they ſay, who, by a particular volition, moves the ſecond ball, being determined to this operation by the impulſe of the firſt ball; in conſequence of thoſe general laws which he has laid down to himſelf in the government of the univerſe. But philoſophers, advancing ſtill in their inquiries, diſcover, that, as we are totally ignorant of the power on which depends the mutual operation of bodies, we are no leſs ignorant of that power, on which depends the operation of mind on body, or of body on mind; nor are we able, either from our ſenſes or conſciouſneſs, to aſſign the ultimate principle in one caſe more than in the other. The ſame ignorance, therefore, reduces them to the ſame concluſion. They aſſert, that the Deity is the immediate cauſe of the union between ſoul and body; and that they are not the organs of ſenſe, which, being agitated by external objects, produce ſenſations in the mind; but that it is a particular volition of our omnipotent Maker, which excites ſuch a ſenſation in conſequence of ſuch a motion in the organ. In like manner, it is not any ener-

gy in the will, that produces local motion in our members: It is God himſelf, who is pleaſed to ſecond our will, in itſelf impotent; and to command that motion which we erroneouſly attribute to our own power and efficacy. Nor do philoſophers ſtop at this concluſion. They ſometimes extend the ſame inference to the mind itſelf in its internal operations. Our mental viſion or conception of ideas, is nothing but a revelation made to us by our Maker. When we voluntarily turn our thoughts to any object, and raiſe up its image in the fancy, it is not the will which creates that idea; it is the univerſal Creator, who diſcovers it to the mind, and renders it preſent to us.

Thus, according to theſe philoſophers, every thing is full of God. Not content with the principle, that nothing exiſts but by his will, that nothing poſſeſſes any power but by his conceſſion; they rob nature, and all created beings, of every power, in order to render their dependence on the Deity ſtill more ſenſible and immediate. They conſider not, that, by this theory, they diminiſh, inſtead of magnifying, the grandeur of thoſe attributes, which they affect ſo much to celebrate. It argues ſurely more power in the Deity to delegate a certain degree of power to inferior creatures, than to produce every thing by his own immediate volition. It argues more wiſdom to contrive at firſt the fabric of the world with ſuch perfect foreſight, that, of itſelf, and by its proper operation, it may ſerve all the purpoſes of providence, than if the great Creator were obliged every moment to adjuſt its parts, and animate by his breath all the wheels of that ſtupendous machine.

But, if we would have a more philoſophical confutation of this theory, perhaps the two following reflections may ſuffice.

Firſt,

Firſt, It ſeems to me, that this theory of the univerſal energy and operation of the Supreme Being, is too bold, ever to carry conviction with it to a man, ſufficiently apprized of the weakneſs of human reaſon, and the narrow limits to which it is confined in all its operations. Though the chain of arguments, which conduct to it, were ever ſo logical, there muſt ariſe a ſtrong ſuſpicion, if not an abſolute aſſurance, that it has carried us quite beyond the reach of our faculties, when it leads to concluſions ſo extraordinary, and ſo remote from common life and experience. We are got into fairy land, long ere we have reached the laſt ſteps of our theory; and there, we have no reaſon to truſt our common methods of argument, or to think that our uſual analogies and probabilities have any authority. Our line is too ſhort to fathom ſuch immenſe abyſſes. And, however we may flatter ourſelves, that we are guided, in every ſtep which we take, by a kind of veriſimilitude and experience, we may be aſſured, that this fancied experience has no authority, when we thus apply it to ſubjects that lie entirely out of the ſphere of experience. But on this we ſhall have occaſion to touch afterwards *.

Secondly, I cannot perceive any force in the arguments on which this theory is founded. We are ignorant, it is true, of the manner in which bodies operate on each other; their force or energy is entirely incomprehenſible: But are we not equally ignorant of the manner or force by which a mind, even the Supreme Mind, operates either on itſelf or on body? Whence, I beſeech you, do we acquire any idea of it? We have no ſentiment or conſciouſneſs of this power in ourſelves. We have no idea of the Supreme Being, but

* Section XII.

what we learn from reflection on our own faculties. Were our ignorance, therefore, a good reaſon for rejecting any thing, we ſhould be led into that principle of denying all energy in the Supreme Being, as much as in the groſſeſt matter. We ſurely comprehend as little the operations of one, as of the other. Is it more difficult to conceive, that motion may ariſe from impulſe, than that it may ariſe from volition? All we know is, our profound ignorance in both caſes *.

PART II.

But to haſten to a concluſion of this argument, which is already drawn out to too great a length: We have ſought in vain for an idea of power or neceſſary connexion, in all the ſources from which we could ſuppoſe it to be derived. It appears that, in ſingle inſtances of the operation of bodies, we never can, by our utmoſt ſcrutiny, diſcover any thing but one event following another; without being able to comprehend any force or power by which the cauſe operates, or any connexion between it and its ſuppoſed effect. The ſame difficulty occurs in contemplating the operations of mind on body; where we obſerve the motion of the latter to follow upon the volition of the former; but are not able to obſerve or conceive the tie which binds together the motion and volition, or the energy, by which the mind produces this effect. The authority of the will over its own faculties and ideas, is not a whit more comprehenſible: ſo that, upon the whole, there appears not, throughout all nature, any one inſtance of connexion, which is conceivable by us. All events ſeem entirely looſe and ſeparate. One event follows another; but we never can obſerve any tie between

* See Note [D].

tween them. They ſeem conjoined, but never connected. And as we can have no idea of any thing, which never appeared to our outward ſenſe or inward ſentiment, the neceſſary concluſion ſeems to be, that we have no idea of connexion or power at all; and that theſe words are abſolutely without any meaning, when employed either in philoſophical reaſonings or common life.

But there ſtill remains one method of avoiding this concluſion, and one ſource which we have not yet examined. When any natural object or event is preſented, it is impoſſible for us, by any ſagacity or penetration, to diſcover, or even conjecture, without experience, what event will reſult from it, or to carry our foreſight beyond that object, which is immediately preſent to the memory and ſenſes. Even after one inſtance or experiment, where we have obſerved a particular event to follow upon another, we are not entitled to form a general rule, or foretel what will happen in like caſes; it being juſtly eſteemed an unpardonable temerity, to judge of the whole courſe of nature from one ſingle experiment, however accurate or certain. But when one particular ſpecies of event has always, in all inſtances, been conjoined with another, we make no longer any ſcruple of foretelling one, upon the appearance of the other, and of employing that reaſoning, which can alone aſſure us of any matter of fact or exiſtence. We then call the one object, Cauſe; the other, Effect. We ſuppoſe, that there is ſome connexion beween them; ſome power in the one, by which it infallibly produces the other, and operates with the greateſt certainty and ſtrongeſt neceſſity.

It appears, then, that this idea of a neceſſary connexion among events, ariſes from a number of ſimilar inſtances,

inſtances, which occur, of the conſtant conjunction of theſe events; nor can that idea ever be ſuggeſted by any one of theſe inſtances, ſurveyed in all poſſible lights and poſitions. But there is nothing in a number of inſtances, different from every ſingle inſtance, which is ſuppoſed to be exactly ſimilar; except only, that after a repetition of ſimilar inſtances, the mind is carried by habit, upon the appearance of one event, to expect its uſual attendant, and to believe that it will exiſt. This connexion, therefore, which we feel in the mind, this cuſtomary tranſition of the imagination from one object to its uſual attendant, is the ſentiment or impreſſion from which we form the idea of power or neceſſary connexion. Nothing farther is in the caſe. Contemplate the ſubject on all ſides; you will never find any other origin of that idea. This is the ſole difference between one inſtance, from which we can never receive the idea of connexion, and a number of ſimilar inſtances, by which it is ſuggeſted. The firſt time a man ſaw the communication of motion by impulſe, as, by the ſhock of two billiard-balls, he could not pronounce that the one event was connected; but only that it was conjoined with the other. After he has obſerved ſeveral inſtances of this nature, he then pronounces them to be connected. What alteration has happened, to give riſe to this new idea of connexion? Nothing, but that he now feels theſe events to be connected in his imagination, and can readily foretel the exiſtence of one, from the appearance of the other. When we ſay, therefore, that one object is connected with another, we mean only, that they have acquired a connexion in our thought, and give riſe to this inference, by which they become proofs of each other's exiſtence: A concluſion which

is

is ſomewhat extraordinary; but which ſeems founded on ſufficient evidence. Nor will its evidence be weakened by any general diffidence of the underſtanding, or ſceptical ſuſpicion concerning every concluſion, which is new and extraordinary. No concluſions can be more agreeable to ſcepticiſm, than ſuch as make diſcoveries concerning the weakneſs and narrow limits of human reaſon and capacity.

And what ſtronger inſtance can be produced of the ſurpriſing ignorance and weakneſs of the underſtanding, than the preſent? For ſurely if there be any relation among objects, which it imports us to know perfectly, it is that of cauſe and effect. On this are founded all our reaſonings concerning matter of fact, or exiſtence. By means of it alone we attain any aſſurance concerning objects which are removed from the preſent teſtimony of our memory and ſenſes. The only immediate utility of all ſciences, is, to teach us how to controul and regulate future events by their cauſes. Our thoughts and inquiries are, therefore, every moment employed about this relation: yet ſo imperfect are the ideas which we form concerning it, that it is impoſſible to give any juſt definition of cauſe, except what is drawn from ſomething extraneous and foreign to it. Similar objects are always conjoined with ſimilar. Of this we have experience. Suitably to this experience, therefore, we may define a cauſe to be "an object followed by another, and where all the objects, ſimilar to the firſt, are followed by objects ſimilar to the ſecond." Or, in other words, "where, if the firſt object had not been, the ſecond never had exiſted." The appearance of a cauſe always conveys the mind, by a cuſtomary tranſition, to the idea of the effect. Of this alſo we have experience. We may, therefore,

therefore, ſuitably to this experience, form another definition of cauſe; and call it, "an object followed by another, and whoſe appearance always conveys the thought to that other." But though both theſe definitions be drawn from circumſtances foreign to the cauſe, we cannot remedy this inconvenience, or attain any more perfect definition which may point out that circumſtance in the cauſe, which gives it a connexion with its effect. We have no idea of this connexion; nor even any diſtinct notion what it is we deſire to know, when we endeavour at a conception of it. We ſay, for inſtance, that the vibration of this ſtring is the cauſe of this particular ſound. But, what do we mean by that affirmation? We either mean, "that this vibration is followed by this ſound, and that all ſimilar vibrations have been followed by ſimilar ſounds:" Or, "that this vibration is followed by this ſound, and that upon the appearance of one, the mind anticipates the ſenſes, and forms immediately an idea of the other." We may conſider the relation of cauſe and effect in either of theſe two lights; but, beyond theſe, we have no idea of it. *

To recapitulate, therefore, the reaſonings of this ſection: Every idea is copied from ſome preceding impreſſion or ſentiment; and where we cannot find any impreſſion, we may be certain that there is no idea. In all ſingle inſtances of the operation of bodies or minds, there is nothing that produces any impreſſion, nor conſequently can ſuggeſt any idea, of power or neceſſary connexion: But when many uniform inſtances appear, and the ſame object is always followed by the ſame event; we then begin to entertain the notion of cauſe and connexion. We then feel a new ſentiment

* See Note [E].

ſentiment or impreſſion, to wit, a cuſtomary connexion in the thought or imagination between one object and its uſual attendant; and this ſentiment is the original of that idea which we ſeek for. For as this idea ariſes from a number of ſimilar inſtances, and not from any ſingle inſtance; it muſt ariſe from that circumſtance, in which the number of inſtances differ from every individual inſtance. But this cuſtomary connexion or tranſition of the imagination is the only circumſtance in which they differ. In every other particular they are alike. The firſt inſtance which we ſaw of motion, communicated by the ſhock of two billiard-balls (to return to this obvious illuſtration), is exactly ſimilar to any inſtance that may at preſent occur to us; except only, that we could not, at firſt, infer one event from the other, which we are enabled to do at preſent, after ſo long a courſe of uniform experience. I know not whether the reader will readily apprehend this reaſoning. I am afraid, that ſhould I multiply words about it, or throw it into a greater variety of lights, it would only become more obſcure and intricate. In all abſtract reaſonings, there is one point of view which, if we can happily hit, we ſhall go farther towards illuſtrating the ſubject, than by all the eloquence and copious expreſſion in the world. This point of view we ſhould endeavour to reach, and reſerve the flowers of rhetoric for ſubjects which are more adapted to them.

SEC.

SECTION VIII.

Of Liberty and Neceſſity.

PART I.

IT might reaſonably be expected, in queſtions which have been canvaſſed and diſputed with great eagerneſs ſince the firſt origin of ſcience and philoſophy, that the meaning of all the terms, at leaſt, ſhould have been agreed upon among the diſputants; and our inquiries, in the courſe of two thouſand years, been able to paſs from words, to the true and real ſubject of the controverſy. For, how eaſy may it ſeem to give exact definitions of the terms employed in reaſoning, and make theſe definitions, not the mere ſound of words, the object of future ſcrutiny and examination? But if we conſider the matter more narrowly, we ſhall be apt to draw a quite oppoſite concluſion. From this circumſtance alone, that a controverſy has been long kept on foot, and remains ſtill undecided, we may preſume, that there is ſome ambiguity in the expreſſion, and that the diſputants affix different ideas to the terms employed in the controverſy. For as the faculties of the mind are ſuppoſed to be naturally alike in every individual; otherwiſe nothing could be more fruitleſs than to reaſon or diſpute together: it were impoſſible, if men affix the ſame ideas to their terms, that they could ſo long form different opinions of the ſame ſubject; eſpecially when they communicate their views, and each party

party turn themſelves on all ſides in ſearch of arguments which may give them the victory over their antagoniſts. It is true, if men attempt the diſcuſſion of queſtions which lie entirely beyond the reach of human capacity, ſuch as thoſe concerning the origin of worlds, or the œconomy of the intellectual ſyſtem or region of ſpirits, they may long beat the air in their fruitleſs conteſts, and never arrive at any determinate concluſion: But if the queſtion regard any ſubject of common life and experience, nothing, one would think, could preſerve the diſpute ſo long undecided, but ſome ambiguous expreſſions which keep the antagoniſts ſtill at a diſtance, and hinder them from grappling with each other.

This has been the caſe in the long diſputed queſtion concerning liberty and neceſſity; and to ſo remarkable a degree, that, if I be not much miſtaken, we ſhall find, that all mankind, both learned and ignorant, have always been of the ſame opinion with regard to this ſubject, and that a few intelligible definitions would immediately have put an end to the whole controverſy. I own, that this diſpute has been ſo much canvaſſed on all hands, and has led philoſophers into ſuch a labyrinth of obſcure ſophiſtry, that it is no wonder, if a ſenſible reader indulge his eaſe ſo far, as to turn a deaf ear to the propoſal of ſuch a queſtion, from which he can expect neither inſtruction nor entertainment. But the ſtate of the argument here propoſed may, perhaps, ſerve to renew his attention; as it has more novelty, promiſes at leaſt ſome deciſion of the controverſy, and will not much diſturb his eaſe by any intricate or obſcure reaſoning.

I hope, therefore, to make it appear, that all men have ever agreed in the doctrine both of neceſſity and of

of liberty, according to any reaſonable ſenſe which can be put on theſe terms; and that the whole controverſy has hitherto turned merely upon words. We ſhall begin with examining the doctrine of neceſſity.

It is univerſally allowed, that matter, in all its operations, is actuated by a neceſſary force, and that every natural effect is ſo preciſely determined by the energy of its cauſe, that no other effect, in ſuch particular circumſtances, could poſſibly have reſulted from it. The degree and direction of every motion, is, by the laws of nature, preſcribed with ſuch exactneſs, that a living creature may as ſoon ariſe from the ſhock of two bodies, as motion, in any other degree or direction than what is actually produced by it. Would we, therefore, form a juſt and preciſe idea of neceſſity, we muſt conſider whence that idea ariſes, when we apply it to the operation of bodies.

It ſeems evident, that, if all the ſcenes of nature were continually ſhifted in ſuch a manner, that no two events bore any reſemblance to each other, but every object was entirely new, without any ſimilitude to whatever had been ſeen before, we ſhould never, in that caſe, have attained the leaſt idea of neceſſity, or of a connexion among theſe objects. We might ſay, upon ſuch a ſuppoſition, that one object or event has followed another; not that one was produced by the other. The relation of cauſe and effect muſt be utterly unknown to mankind. Inference and reaſoning concerning the operations of nature would, from that moment, be at an end; and the memory and ſenſes remain the only canals, by which the knowledge of any real exiſtence could poſſibly have acceſs to the mind. Our idea, therefore, of neceſſity and cauſation, ariſes entirely from the uniformity obſervable in the operations of nature;

ture; where ſimilar objects are conſtantly conjoined together, and the mind is determined by cuſtom to infer the one from the appearance of the other. Theſe two circumſtances form the whole of that neceſſity which we aſcribe to matter. Beyond the conſtant conjunction of ſimilar objects, and the conſequent inference from one to the other, we have no notion of any neceſſity or connexion.

If it appear, therefore, that all mankind have ever allowed, without any doubt or heſitation, that theſe two circumſtances take place in the voluntary actions of men, and in the operations of mind; it muſt follow, that all mankind have ever agreed in the doctrine of neceſſity, and that they have hitherto diſputed, merely for not underſtanding each other.

As to the firſt circumſtance, the conſtant and regular conjunction of ſimilar events; we may poſſibly ſatisfy ourſelves by the following conſiderations. It is univerſally acknowledged, that there is a great uniformity among the actions of men, in all nations and ages; and that human nature remains ſtill the ſame in its principles and operations. The ſame motives always produce the ſame actions: The ſame events follow from the ſame cauſes. Ambition, avarice, ſelf-love, vanity, friendſhip, generoſity, public ſpirit; theſe paſſions, mixed in various degrees, and diſtributed through ſociety, have been, from the beginning of the world, and ſtill are, the ſource of all the actions and enterpriſes which have ever been obſerved among mankind. Would you know the ſentiments, inclinations, and courſe of life of the Greeks and Romans? ſtudy well the temper and actions of the French and Engliſh: You cannot be much miſtaken in transferring to the former moſt of the obſervations which you have made

with regard to the latter. Mankind are ſo much the ſame, in all times and places, that hiſtory informs us of nothing new or ſtrange in this particular. Its chief uſe is, only to diſcover the conſtant and univerſal principles of human nature, by ſhowing men in all varieties of circumſtances and ſituations, and furniſhing us with materials, from which we may form our obſervations, and become acquainted with the regular ſprings of human action and behaviour. Theſe records of wars, intrigues, factions, and revolutions, are ſo many collections of experiments, by which the politician or moral philoſopher fixes the principles of his ſcience; in the ſame manner as the phyſician or natural philoſopher becomes acquainted with the nature of plants, minerals, and other external objects, by the experiments which he forms concerning them. Nor are the earth, water, and other elements, examined by Ariſtotle and Hippocrates, more like to thoſe which at preſent lie under our obſervation, than the men deſcribed by Polybius and Tacitus, are to thoſe who now govern the world.

Should a traveller, returning from a far country, bring us an account of men, wholly different from any with whom we were ever acquainted; men, who were entirely diveſted of avarice, ambition, or revenge; who knew no pleaſure but friendſhip, generoſity, and public ſpirit; we ſhould immediately, from theſe circumſtances, detect the falſehood, and prove him a liar, with the ſame certainty as if he had ſtuffed his narration with ſtories of centaurs and dragons, miracles and prodigies. And if we would explode any forgery in hiſtory, we cannot make uſe of a more convincing argument, than to prove, that the actions, aſcribed to any perſon, are directly contrary to the courſe of nature,

ture, and that no human motives, in ſuch circumſtances, could ever induce him to ſuch a conduct. The veracity of Quintus Curtius is as much to be ſuſpected, when he deſcribes the ſupernatural courage of Alexander, by which he was hurried on ſingly to attack multitudes, as when he deſcribes his ſupernatural force and activity, by which he was able to reſiſt them. So readily and univerſally do we acknowledge a uniformity in human motives and actions, as well as in the operations of body.

Hence likewiſe the benefit of that experience, acquired by long life and a variety of buſineſs and company, in order to inſtruct us in the principles of human nature, and regulate our future conduct, as well as ſpeculation. By means of this guide, we mount up to the knowledge of mens inclinations and motives, from their actions, expreſſions, and even geſtures; and again deſcend to the interpretation of their actions, from our knowledge of their motives and inclinations. The general obſervations, treaſured up by a courſe of experience, give us the clue of human nature, and teach us to unravel all its intricacies. Pretexts and appearances no longer deceive us. Public declarations paſs for the ſpecious colouring of a cauſe. And though virtue and honour be allowed their proper weight and authority, that perfect diſintereſtedneſs, ſo often pretended to, is never expected in multitudes and parties; ſeldom in their leaders, and ſcarcely even in individuals of any rank or ſtation. But were there no uniformity in human actions, and were every experiment, which we could form of this kind, irregular and anomalous, it were impoſſible to collect any general obſervations concerning mankind; and no experience, however accurately digeſted by reflection, would ever ſerve

to any purpoſe. Why is the aged huſbandman more ſkilful in his calling than the young beginner, but becauſe there is a certain uniformity in the operation of the ſun, rain and earth, towards the production of vegetables; and experience teaches the old practitioner the rules by which this operation is governed and directed?

We muſt not, however, expect, that this uniformity of human actions ſhould be carried to ſuch a length, as that all men, in the ſame circumſtances, will always act preciſely in the ſame manner, without making any allowance for the diverſity of characters, prejudices, and opinions. Such a uniformity, in every particular, is found in no part of nature. On the contrary, from obſerving the variety of conduct in different men, we are enabled to form a greater variety of maxims, which ſtill ſuppoſe a degree of uniformity and regularity.

Are the manners of men different in different ages and countries? We learn thence the great force of cuſtom and education, which mould the human mind from its infancy, and form it into a fixed and eſtabliſhed character. Is the behaviour and conduct of the one ſex very unlike that of the other? It is thence we become acquainted with the different characters, which nature has impreſſed upon the ſexes, and which ſhe preſerves with conſtancy and regularity. Are the actions of the ſame perſon much diverſified in the different periods of his life, from infancy to old age? This affords room for many general obſervations concerning the gradual change of our ſentiments and inclinations, and the different maxims which prevail in the different ages of human creatures. Even the characters which are peculiar to each individual, have a uniformity in their influence; otherwiſe our acquaintance with the

the perſons, and our obſervation of their conduct, could never teach us their diſpoſitions, or ſerve to direct our behaviour with regard to them.

I grant it poſſible to find ſome actions, which ſeem to have no regular connexion with any known motives, and are exceptions to all the meaſures of conduct, which have ever been eſtabliſhed for the government of men. But if we would willingly know, what judgment ſhould be formed of ſuch irregular and extraordinary actions; we may conſider the ſentiments commonly entertained with regard to thoſe irregular events, which appear in the courſe of nature, and the operations of external objects. All cauſes are not conjoined to their uſual effects with like uniformity. An artificer, who handles only dead matter, may be diſappointed of his aim, as well as the politician, who directs the conduct of ſenſible and intelligent agents.

The vulgar, who take things according to their firſt appearance, attribute the uncertainty of events to ſuch an uncertainty in the cauſes, as makes the latter often fail of their uſual influence; though they meet with no impediment in their operation. But philoſophers, obſerving, that, almoſt in every part of nature, there is contained a vaſt variety of ſprings and principles, which are hid, by reaſon of their minuteneſs or remoteneſs, find, that it is at leaſt poſſible the contrariety of events may not proceed from any contingency in the cauſe, but from the ſecret operation of contrary cauſes. This poſſibility is converted into certainty by farther obſervation; when they remark, that, upon an exact ſcrutiny, a contrariety of effects always betrays a contrariety of cauſes, and proceeds from their mutual oppoſition. A peaſant can give no better reaſon for the ſtopping of any clock or watch, than to ſay that it does not com-

monly go right: But an artiſt eaſily perceives, that the ſame force in the ſpring or pendulum has always the ſame influence on the wheels; but fails of its uſual effect, perhaps, by reaſon of a grain of duſt, which puts a ſtop to the whole movement. From the obſervation of ſeveral parallel inſtances, philoſophers form a maxim, that the connexion between all cauſes and effects is equally neceſſary, and that its ſeeming uncertainty, in ſome inſtances, proceeds from the ſecret oppoſition of contrary cauſes.

Thus, for inſtance, in the human body, when the uſual ſymptoms of health or ſickneſs diſappoint our expectation; when medicines operate not with their wonted powers; when irregular events follow from any particular cauſe; the philoſopher and phyſician are not ſurpriſed at the matter, nor are ever tempted to deny, in general, the neceſſity and uniformity of thoſe principles, by which the animal œconomy is conducted. They know, that a human body is a mighty complicated machine; that many ſecret powers lurk in it, which are altogether beyond our comprehenſion; that to us it muſt often appear very uncertain in its operations; and that therefore the irregular events, which outwardly diſcover themſelves, can be no proof, that the laws of nature are not obſerved with the greateſt regularity in its internal operations and government.

The philoſopher, if he be conſiſtent, muſt apply the ſame reaſoning to the actions and volitions of intelligent agents. The moſt irregular and unexpected reſolutions of men may frequently be accounted for by thoſe, who know every particular circumſtance of their character and ſituation. A perſon of an obliging diſpoſition gives a peeviſh anſwer: but he has the tooth-

ach,

ach, or has not dined. A ſtupid fellow diſcovers an uncommon alacrity in his carriage: but he has met with a ſudden piece of good fortune. Or even when an action, as ſometimes happens, cannot be particularly accounted for, either by the perſon himſelf or by others; we know, in general, that the characters of men are, to a certain degree, inconſtant and irregular. This is, in a manner, the conſtant character of human nature; though it be applicable, in a more particular manner, to ſome perſons, who have no fixed rule for their conduct, but proceed in a continued courſe of caprice and inconſtancy. The internal principles and motives may operate in a uniform manner, notwithſtanding theſe ſeeming irregularities; in the ſame manner as the winds, rain, clouds, and other variations of the weather, are ſuppoſed to be governed by ſteady principles; though not eaſily diſcoverable by human ſagacity and inquiry.

Thus it appears, not only that the conjunction between motives and voluntary actions is as regular and uniform, as that between the cauſe and effect in any part of nature; but alſo that this regular conjunction has been univerſally acknowledged among mankind, and has never been the ſubject of diſpute, either in philoſophy or common life. Now, as it is from paſt experience that we draw all inferences concerning the future, and as we conclude that objects will always be conjoined together, which we find to have always been conjoined, it may ſeem ſuperfluous to prove, that this experienced uniformity in human actions, is a ſource whence we draw inferences concerning them. But in order to throw the argument into a greater variety of lights, we ſhall alſo inſiſt, though briefly, on this latter topic.

The mutual dependence of men is ſo great, in all ſocieties, that ſcarcely any human action is entirely complete in itſelf, or is performed without ſome reference to the actions of others, which are requiſite to make it anſwer fully the intention of the agent. The pooreſt artificer, who labours alone, expects at leaſt the protection of the magiſtrate, to inſure him the enjoyment of the fruits of his labour. He alſo expects, that, when he carries his goods to market, and offers them at a reaſonable price, he ſhall find purchaſers, and ſhall be able, by the money he acquires, to engage others to ſupply him with thoſe commodities which are requiſite for his ſubſiſtence. In proportion as men extend their dealings, and render their intercourſe with others more complicated, they always comprehend, in their ſchemes of life, a greater variety of voluntary actions, which they expect, from the proper motives, to co-operate with their own. In all theſe concluſions, they take their meaſures from paſt experience, in the ſame manner as in their reaſonings concerning external objects, and firmly believe, that men, as well as all the elements, are to continue in their operations, the ſame that they have ever found them. A manufacturer reckons upon the labour of his ſervants for the execution of any work, as much as upon the tools which he employs; and would be equally ſurpriſed, were his expectations diſappointed. In ſhort, this experimental inference and reaſoning concerning the actions of others, enters ſo much into human life, that no man, while awake, is ever a moment without employing it. Have we not reaſon, therefore, to affirm, that all mankind have always agreed in the doctrine of neceſſity, according to the foregoing definition and explication of it.

Nor

Nor have philoſophers ever entertained a different opinion from the people in this particular: For, not to mention, that almoſt every action of their life ſuppoſes that opinion; there are even few of the ſpeculative parts of learning to which it is not eſſential. What would become of hiſtory, had we not a dependence on the veracity of the hiſtorian, according to the experience which we have had of mankind? How could politics be a ſcience, if laws and forms of government had not a uniform influence upon ſociety? Where would be the foundation of morals, if particular characters had no certain or determinate power to produce particular ſentiments, and if theſe ſentiments had no conſtant operation on actions? And with what pretence could we employ our criticiſm upon any poet or polite author, if we could not pronounce the conduct and ſentiments of his actors, either natural or unnatural, to ſuch characters, and in ſuch circumſtances? It ſeems almoſt impoſſible, therefore, to engage, either in ſcience or action of any kind, without acknowledging the doctrine of neceſſity; and this inference from motives to voluntary actions; from characters to conduct.

And indeed, when we conſider how aptly natural and moral evidence link together, and form only one chain of argument, we ſhall make no ſcruple to allow, that they are of the ſame nature, and derived from the ſame principles. A priſoner, who has neither money nor intereſt, diſcovers the impoſſibility of his eſcape, as well when he conſiders the obſtinacy of the gaoler, as the walls and bars with which he is ſurrounded; and, in all attempts for his freedom, chooſes rather to work upon the ſtone and iron of the one, than upon the inflexible nature of the other. The ſame priſoner, when

when conducted to the ſcaffold, foreſees his death as certainly from the conſtancy and fidelity of his guards, as from the operation of the axe or wheel. His mind runs along a certain train of ideas: The refuſal of the ſoldiers to conſent to his eſcape; the action of the executioner; the ſeparation of the head and body; bleeding, convulſive motions, and death. Here is a connected chain of natural cauſes and voluntary actions; but the mind feels no difference between them, in paſſing from one link to another; nor is leſs certain of the future event than if it were connected with the objects preſent to the memory or ſenſes, by a train of cauſes, cemented together by what we are pleaſed to call a Phyſical neceſſity. The ſame experienced union has the ſame effect on the mind, whether the united objects be motives, volition, and actions; or figure and motion. We may change the names of things; but their nature, and their operation on the underſtanding, never change.

Were a man, whom I know to be honeſt and opulent, and with whom I live in intimate friendſhip, to come into my houſe, where I am ſurrounded with my ſervants, I reſt aſſured, that he is not to ſtab me before he leaves it, in order to rob me of my ſilver ſtandiſh; and I no more ſuſpect this event, than the falling of the houſe itſelf, which is new, and ſolidly built and founded.—'But he may have been ſeized with a ſudden and unknown frenzy.'—So may a ſudden earthquake ariſe, and ſhake and tumble my houſe about my ears. I ſhall therefore change the ſuppoſitions. I ſhall ſay, that I know with certainty, that he is not to put his hand into the fire, and hold it there till it be conſumed: And this event, I think, I can foretel with the ſame aſſurance, as that, if he throw himſelf

himſelf out of the window, and meet with no obſtruction, he will not remain a moment ſuſpended in the air. No ſuſpicion of an unknown frenzy can give the leaſt poſſibility to the former event, which is ſo contrary to all the known principles of human nature. A man who at noon leaves his purſe full of gold on the pavement at Charingcroſs, may as well expect that it will fly away like a feather, as that he will find it untouched an hour after. Above one half of human reaſonings contain inferences of a ſimilar nature, attended with more or leſs degrees of certainty, proportioned to our experience of the uſual conduct of mankind in ſuch particular ſituations.

I have frequently conſidered, what could poſſibly be the reaſon, why all mankind, though they have ever, without heſitation, acknowledged the doctrine of neceſſity, in their whole practice and reaſoning, have yet diſcovered ſuch a reluctance to acknowledge it in words, and have rather ſhown a propenſity, in all ages, to profeſs the contrary opinion. The matter, I think, may be accounted for after the following manner. If we examine the operations of body, and the production of effects from their cauſes, we ſhall find, that all our faculties can never carry us farther in our knowledge of this relation, than barely to obſerve, that particular objects are conſtantly conjoined together, and that the mind is carried, by a cuſtomary tranſition, from the appearance of one to the belief of the other. But though this concluſion concerning human ignorance, be the reſult of the ſtricteſt ſcrutiny of this ſubject, men ſtill entertain a ſtrong propenſity to believe, that they penetrate farther into the powers of nature, and perceive ſomething like a neceſſary connexion between the cauſe and the effect.

effect. When again they turn their reflections towards the operations of their own minds, and feel no such connexion of the motive and the action; they are thence apt to suppose, that there is a difference between the effects, which result from material force, and those which arise from thought and intelligence. But being once convinced, that we know nothing farther of causation of any kind, than merely the constant conjunction of objects, and the consequent inference of the mind from one to another, and finding, that these two circumstances are universally allowed to have place in voluntary actions; we may be more easily led to own the same necessity common to all causes. And though this reasoning may contradict the systems of many philosophers, in ascribing necessity to the determinations of the will, we shall find, upon reflection, that they dissent from it in words only, not in their real sentiment. Necessity, according to the sense in which it is here taken, has never yet been rejected, nor can ever, I think, be rejected by any philosopher. It may only, perhaps, be pretended, that the mind can perceive, in the operations of matter, some farther connexion between the cause and effect; and a connexion that has not place in the voluntary actions of intelligent beings. Now, whether it be so or not, can only appear upon examination; and it is incumbent on these philosophers to make good their assertion, by defining or describing that necessity, and pointing it out to us in the operations of material causes.

It would seem, indeed, that men begin at the wrong end of this question concerning liberty and necessity, when they enter upon it by examining the faculties of the soul, the influence of the understanding, and the operations of the will. Let them first discuss a more simple

ſimple queſtion, namely, the operations of body and of brute unintelligent matter; and try whether they can there form any idea of cauſation and neceſſity, except that of a conſtant conjunction of objects, and ſubſequent inference of the mind from one to another. If theſe circumſtances form, in reality, the whole of that neceſſity, which we conceive in matter, and if theſe circumſtances be alſo univerſally acknowledged to take place in the operations of the mind, the diſpute is at an end; at leaſt, muſt be owned to be thenceforth merely verbal. But as long as we will raſhly ſuppoſe, that we have ſome farther idea of neceſſity and cauſation in the operations of external objects; at the ſame time, that we can find nothing farther in the voluntary actions of the mind; there is no poſſibility of bringing the queſtion to any determinate iſſue, while we proceed upon ſo erroneous a ſuppoſition. The only method of undeceiving us, is, to mount up higher; to examine the narrow extent of ſcience when applied to material cauſes; and to convince ourſelves, that all we know of them, is, the conſtant conjunction and inference above mentioned. We may, perhaps, find, that it is with difficulty we are induced to fix ſuch narrow limits to human underſtanding: But we can afterwards find no difficulty when we come to apply this doctrine to the actions of the will. For as it is evident, that theſe have a regular conjunction with motives and circumſtances and characters, and as we always draw inferences from one to the other, we muſt be obliged to acknowledge in words, that neceſſity, which we have already avowed, in every deliberation of our lives, and in every ſtep of our conduct and behaviour *.

But,

* See Note [F].

But, to proceed in this reconciling project with regard to the queſtion of liberty and neceſſity; the moſt contentious queſtion of metaphyſics, the moſt contentious ſcience; it will not require many words to prove, that all mankind have ever agreed in the doctrine of liberty, as well as in that of neceſſity; and that the whole diſpute, in this reſpect alſo, has been hitherto merely verbal. For, what is meant by liberty, when applied to voluntary actions? We cannot ſurely mean, that actions have ſo little connexion with motives, inclinations, and circumſtances, that one does not follow with a certain degree of uniformity from the other; and that one affords no inference by which we can conclude the exiſtence of the other? For theſe are plain and acknowledged matters of fact. By liberty, then, we can only mean 'a power of acting or not acting, according to the determinations of the will;' that is, if we chooſe to remain at reſt, we may; if we chooſe to move, we alſo may. Now this hypothetical liberty is univerſally allowed to belong to every one, who is not a priſoner and in chains. Here then is no ſubject of diſpute.

Whatever definition we may give of liberty, we ſhould be careful to obſerve two requiſite circumſtances: firſt, that it be conſiſtent with plain matter of fact; ſecondly, that it be conſiſtent with itſelf. If we obſerve theſe circumſtances, and render our definition intelligible, I am perſuaded that all mankind will be found of one opinion with regard to it.

It is univerſally allowed, that nothing exiſts without a cauſe of its exiſtence; and that chance, when ſtrictly examined, is a mere negative word, and means not any real power, which has any where a being in nature. But it is pretended, that ſome cauſes are neceſſary,

ſary, ſome not neceſſary. Here then is the advantage of definitions. Let any one define a cauſe, without comprehending, as a part of the definition, neceſſary connection with its effect; and let him ſhow diſtinctly the origin of the idea, expreſſed by the definition; and I ſhall readily give up the whole controverſy. But if the foregoing explication of the matter be received, this muſt be abſolutely impracticable. Had not objects a regular conjunction with each other, we ſhould never have entertained any notion of cauſe and effect; and this regular conjunction produces that inference of the underſtanding, which is the only connexion that we can have any comprehenſion of. Whoever attempts a definition of cauſe, excluſive of theſe circumſtances, will be obliged, either to employ unintelligible terms, or ſuch as are ſynonymous to the term, which he endeavours to define *. And if the definition above mentioned be admitted; liberty, when oppoſed to neceſſity, not to conſtraint, is the ſame thing with chance; which is univerſally allowed to have no exiſtence.

PART II.

THERE is no method of reaſoning more common, and yet none more blameable, than, in philoſophical diſputes, to endeavour the refutation of any hypotheſis, by a pretence of its dangerous conſequences to religion and morality. When any opinion leads to abſurdities, it is certainly falſe; but it is not certain that an opinion is falſe, becauſe it is of dangerous conſequence. Such topics, therefore, ought entirely to be foreborne; as

* See Note [G].

as ſerving nothing to the diſcovery of truth, but only to make the perſon of an antagoniſt odious. This I obſerve in general, without pretending to draw any advantage from it. I frankly ſubmit to an examination of this kind; and ſhall venture to affirm, that the doctrines, both of neceſſity and of liberty, as above explained, are not only conſiſtent with morality, but are abſolutely eſſential to its ſupport.

Neceſſity may be defined two ways, conformably to the two definitions of Cauſe, of which it makes an eſſential part. It conſiſts either in the conſtant conjunction of like objects, or in the inference of the underſtanding from one object to another. Now, neceſſity, in both theſe ſenſes (which, indeed, are at bottom the ſame), has univerſally, though tacitly, in the ſchools, in the pulpit, and in common life, been allowed to belong to the will of man; and no one has ever pretended to deny, that we can draw inferences concerning human actions, and that thoſe inferences are founded on the experienced union of like actions, with like motives, inclinations, and circumſtances. The only particular, in which any one can differ, is, that either, perhaps, he will refuſe to give the name of neceſſity to this property of human actions; but as long as the meaning is underſtood, I hope the word can do no harm: Or that he will maintain it poſſible to diſcover ſomething farther in the operations of matter. But this, it muſt be acknowledged, can be of no conſequence to morality or religion, whatever it may be to natural philoſophy or metaphyſics. We may here be miſtaken in aſſerting, that there is no idea of any other neceſſity or connexion in the actions of body: But ſurely we aſcribe nothing to the actions of the mind, but what every one does, and muſt readily allow

allow of. We change no circumſtance in the received orthodox ſyſtem with regard to the will, but only in that with regard to material objects and cauſes. Nothing therefore can be more innocent, at leaſt, than this doctrine.

All laws being founded on rewards and puniſhments, it is ſuppoſed as a fundamental principle, that theſe motives have a regular and uniform influence on the mind, and both produce the good, and prevent the evil, actions. We may give to this influence what name we pleaſe; but as it is uſually conjoined with the action, it muſt be eſteemed a cauſe, and be looked upon as an inſtance of that neceſſity which we would here eſtabliſh.

The only proper object of hatred or vengeance, is a perſon or creature, endowed with thought and conſciouſneſs; and when any criminal or injurious actions excite that paſſion, it is only by their relation to the perſon, or connexion with him. Actions are, by their very nature, temporary and periſhing; and where they proceed not from ſome cauſe in the character and diſpoſition of the perſon who performed them, they can neither redound to his honour, if good, nor infamy, if evil. The actions themſelves may be blameable; they may be contrary to all the rules of morality and religion: but the perſon is not anſwerable for them: and as they proceeded from nothing in him that is durable and conſtant, and leave nothing of that nature behind them, it is impoſſible he can, upon their account, become the object of puniſhment or vengeance. According to the principle, therefore, which denies neceſſity, and conſequently cauſes, a man is as pure and untainted, after having committed the moſt horrid crime, as at the firſt moment of his birth: nor is his

character anywiſe concerned in his actions; ſince they are not derived from it, and the wickedneſs of the one can never be uſed as a proof of the depravity of the other.

Men are not blamed for ſuch actions as they perform ignorantly and caſually, whatever may be the conſequences. Why? but becauſe the principles of theſe actions are only momentary, and terminate in them alone. Men are leſs blamed for ſuch actions as they perform haſtily and unpremeditately, than for ſuch as proceed from deliberation. For what reaſon? but becauſe a haſty temper, though a conſtant cauſe or principle in the mind, operates only by intervals, and infects not the whole character. Again, repentance wipes off every crime, if attended with a reformation of life and manners. How is this to be accounted for? but by aſſerting, that actions render a perſon criminal, merely as they are proofs of criminal principles in the mind; and when, by an alteration of theſe principles, they ceaſe to be juſt proofs, they likewiſe ceaſe to be criminal. But, except upon the doctrine of neceſſity, they never were juſt proofs, and conſequently never were criminal.

It will be equally eaſy to prove, and from the ſame arguments, that liberty, according to that definition above mentioned, in which all men agree, is alſo eſſential to morality; and that no human actions, where it is wanting, are ſuſceptible of any moral qualities, or can be the objects either of approbation or diſlike. For as actions are objects of our moral ſentiment, ſo far only as they are indications of the internal character, paſſions, and affections; it is impoſſible that they can give riſe either to praiſe or blame, where they proceed

ceed not from theſe principles, but are derived altogether from external violence.

I pretend not to have obviated or removed all objections to this theory, with regard to neceſſity and liberty. I can foreſee other objections, derived from topics, which have not here been treated of. It may be ſaid, for inſtance, that, if voluntary actions be ſubjected to the ſame laws of neceſſity with the operations of matter, there is a continued chain of neceſſary cauſes, preordained and predetermined, reaching from the original cauſe of all, to every ſingle volition of every human creature. No contingency any where in the univerſe; no indifference; no liberty. While we act, we are, at the ſame time, acted upon. The ultimate Author of all our volitions, is the Creator of the world, who firſt beſtowed motion on this immenſe machine, and placed all beings in that particular poſition, whence every ſubſequent event, by an inevitable neceſſity, muſt reſult. Human actions, therefore, either can have no moral turpitude at all, as proceeding from ſo good a cauſe; or if they have any turpitude, they muſt involve our Creator in the ſame guilt, while he is acknowledged to be their ultimate cauſe and author. For as a man, who fired a mine, is anſwerable for all the conſequences, whether the train he employed be long or ſhort; ſo, wherever a continued chain of neceſſary cauſes is fixed, that Being, either finite or infinite, who produces the firſt, is likewiſe the author of all the reſt, and muſt both bear the blame, and acquire the praiſe, which belong to them. Our clear and unalterable ideas of morality eſtabliſh this rule upon unqueſtionable reaſons, when we examine the conſequences of any human action; and theſe reaſons muſt ſtill have greater force, when applied to the volitions

and intentions of a Being infinitely wiſe and powerful. Ignorance or impotence may be pleaded for ſo limited a creature as man; but thoſe imperfections have no place in our Creator. He foreſaw, he ordained, he intended all thoſe actions of men, which we ſo raſhly pronounce criminal. And we muſt therefore conclude, either that they are not criminal, or that the Deity, not man, is accountable for them. But as either of theſe poſitions is abſurd and impious, it follows, that the doctrine, from which they are deduced, cannot poſſibly be true, as being liable to all the ſame objections. An abſurd conſequence, if neceſſary, proves the original doctrine to be abſurd; in the ſame manner as criminal actions render criminal the original cauſe, if the connexion between them be neceſſary and inevitable.

This objection conſiſts of two parts, which we ſhall examine ſeparately; firſt, That if human actions can be traced up, by a neceſſary chain, to the Deity, they can never be criminal; on account of the infinite perfection of that Being from whom they are derived, and who can intend nothing but what is altogether good and laudable. Or, ſecondly, If they be criminal, we muſt retract the attribute of perfection, which we aſcribe to the Deity, and muſt acknowledge him to be the ultimate author of guilt and moral turpitude in all his creatures.

The anſwer to the firſt objection, ſeems obvious and convincing. There are many philoſophers, who, after an exact ſcrutiny of all the phænomena of nature, conclude, that the whole, conſidered as one ſyſtem, is, in every period of its exiſtence, ordered with perfect benevolence; and that the utmoſt poſſible happineſs will, in the end, reſult to all created beings, without any

any mixture of poſitive or abſolute ill and miſery. Every phyſical ill, ſay they, makes an eſſential part of this benevolent ſyſtem, and could not poſſibly be removed, even by the Deity himſelf, conſidered as a wiſe agent, without giving entrance to greater ill, or excluding greater good, which will reſult from it. From this theory, ſome philoſophers, and the ancient Stoics among the reſt, derived a topic of conſolation under all afflictions, while they taught their pupils, that thoſe ills under which they laboured, were, in reality, goods to the univerſe; and that, to an enlarged view, which could comprehend the whole ſyſtem of nature, every event became an object of joy and exultation. But though this topic be ſpecious and ſublime, it was ſoon found in practice weak and ineffectual. You would ſurely more irritate than appeaſe a man, lying under the racking pains of the gout, by preaching up to him the rectitude of thoſe general laws, which produced the malignant humours in his body, and led them, through the proper canals, to the ſinews and nerves, where they now excite ſuch acute torments. Theſe enlarged views may, for a moment, pleaſe the imagination of a ſpeculative man, who is placed in eaſe and ſecurity; but neither can they dwell with conſtancy on his mind, even though undiſturbed by the emotions of pain or paſſion; much leſs can they maintain their ground, when attacked by ſuch powerful antagoniſts. The affections take a narrower and more natural ſurvey of their object; and by an œconomy, more ſuitable to the infirmity of human minds, regard alone the beings around us, and are actuated by ſuch events as appear good or ill to the private ſyſtem.

The caſe is the ſame with Moral as with Phyſical ill. It cannot reaſonably be ſuppoſed, that thoſe re-

more conſiderations, which are found of ſo little efficacy with regard to one, will have a more powerful influence with regard to the other. The mind of man is ſo formed by nature, that upon the appearance of certain characters, diſpoſitions, and actions, it immediately feels the ſentiment of approbation or blame; nor are there any emotions more eſſential to its frame and conſtitution. The characters which engage our approbation, are chiefly ſuch as contribute to the peace and ſecurity of human ſociety; as the characters which excite blame, are chiefly ſuch as tend to public detriment and diſturbance: Whence it may reaſonably be preſumed, that the moral ſentiments ariſe, either mediately or immediately, from a reflection on theſe oppoſite intereſts. What though philoſophical meditations eſtabliſh a different opinion or conjecture; that every thing is right with regard to the WHOLE, and that the qualities which diſturb ſociety, are, in the main, as beneficial, and are as ſuitable to the primary intention of nature, as thoſe which more directly promote its happineſs and welfare? Are ſuch remote and uncertain ſpeculations able to counterbalance the ſentiments which ariſe from the natural and immediate view of the objects? A man who is robbed of a conſiderable ſum, does he find his vexation for the loſs anywiſe diminiſhed by theſe ſublime reflections? Why then ſhould his moral reſentment againſt the crime be ſuppoſed incompatible with them? Or why ſhould not the acknowledgment of a real diſtinction between vice and virtue be reconcileable to all ſpeculative ſyſtems of philoſophy, as well as that of a real diſtinction between perſonal beauty and deformity? Both theſe diſtinctions are founded on the natural ſentiments of the human mind: And theſe ſentiments are

not

not to be controuled or altered by any philoſophical theory or ſpeculation whatſoever.

The ſecond objection admits not of ſo eaſy and ſatisfactory an anſwer; nor is it poſſible to explain diſtinctly, how the Deity can be the mediate cauſe of all the actions of men, without being the author of ſin and moral turpitude. Theſe are myſteries, which mere natural and unaſſiſted reaſon is very unfit to handle; and whatever ſyſtem ſhe embraces, ſhe muſt find herſelf involved in inextricable difficulties, and even contradictions, at every ſtep which ſhe takes with regard to ſuch ſubjects. To reconcile the indifference and contingency of human actions with preſcience; or, to defend abſolute decrees, and yet free the Deity from being the author of ſin, has been found hitherto to exceed all the power of philoſophy. Happy, if ſhe be thence ſenſible of her temerity, when ſhe pries into theſe ſublime myſteries; and, leaving a ſcene ſo full of obſcurities and perplexities, return, with ſuitable modeſty, to her true and proper province, the examination of common life; where ſhe will find difficulties enow to employ her inquiries, without launching into ſo boundleſs an ocean of doubt, uncertainty, and contradiction!

SECTION IX.

Of the Reaſon of Animals.

ALL our reaſonings concerning matter of fact are founded on a ſpecies of Analogy, which leads us to expect from any cauſe the ſame events which we have obſerved to reſult from ſimilar cauſes. Where the cauſes are entirely ſimilar, the analogy is perfect, and the inference drawn from it is regarded as certain and concluſive: Nor does any man ever entertain a doubt, where he ſees a piece of iron, that it will have weight and coheſion of parts; as in all other inſtances, which have ever fallen under his obſervation. But where the objects have not ſo exact a ſimilarity, the analogy is leſs perfect, and the inference is leſs concluſive; though ſtill it has ſome force, in proportion to the degree of ſimilarity and reſemblance. The anatomical obſervations, formed upon one animal, are by this ſpecies of reaſoning extended to all animals; and it is certain, that when the circulation of the blood, for inſtance, is clearly proved to have place in one creature, as a frog, or fiſh, it forms a ſtrong preſumption, that the ſame principle has place in all. Theſe analogical obſervations may be carried farther, even to this ſcience of which we are now treating; and any theory, by which we explain the operations of the underſtanding, or the origin and connexion of the paſſions in man, will acquire additional authority,

if

if we find, that the ſame theory is requiſite to explain the ſame phænomena in all other animals. We ſhall make trial of this, with regard to the hypotheſis, by which we have, in the foregoing diſcourſe, endeavoured to account for all experimental reaſonings; and it is hoped that this new point of view will ſerve to confirm all our former obſervations.

Firſt, It ſeems evident, that animals, as well as men, learn many things from experience, and infer, that the ſame events will always follow from the ſame cauſes. By this principle they become acquainted with the more obvious properties of external objects, and gradually, from their birth, treaſure up a knowledge of the nature of fire, water, earth, ſtones, heights, depths, &c. and of the effects which reſult from their operation. The ignorance and inexperience of the young are here plainly diſtinguiſhable from the cunning and ſagacity of the old, who have learned, by long obſervation, to avoid what hurt them, and to purſue what gave eaſe or pleaſure. A horſe, that has been accuſtomed to the field, becomes acquainted with the proper height which he can leap, and will never attempt what exceeds his force and ability. An old greyhound will truſt the more fatiguing part of the chace to the younger, and will place himſelf ſo as to meet the hare in her doubles; nor are the conjectures which he forms on this occaſion, founded in any thing but his obſervation and experience.

This is ſtill more evident from the effects of diſcipline and education on animals, who, by the proper application of rewards and puniſhments, may be taught any courſe of action, the moſt contrary to their natural inſtincts and propenſities. Is it not experience, which renders a dog apprehenſive of pain, when you menace him,

him, or lift up the whip to beat him? Is it not even experience which makes him anſwer to his name, and infer from ſuch an arbitrary ſound, that you mean him rather than any of his fellows, and intend to call him, when you pronounce it in a certain manner, and with a certain tone and accent?

In all theſe caſes, we may obſerve, that the animal infers ſome fact beyond what immediately ſtrikes his ſenſes; and that this inference is altogether founded on paſt experience, while the creature expects from the preſent object the ſame conſequences, which it has always found, in its obſervation, to reſult from ſimilar objects.

Secondly, It is impoſſible that this inference of the animal can be founded on any proceſs of argument or reaſoning, by which he concludes, that like events muſt follow like objects, and that the courſe of nature will always be regular in its operations. For if there be in reality any arguments of this nature, they ſurely ly too abſtruſe for the obſervation of ſuch imperfect underſtandings; ſince it may well employ the utmoſt care and attention of a philoſophic genius to diſcover and obſerve them. Animals, therefore, are not guided in theſe inferences by reaſoning: neither are children: neither are the generality of mankind, in their ordinary actions and concluſions: neither are philoſophers themſelves, who, in all the active parts of life, are, in the main, the ſame with the vulgar, and are governed by the ſame maxims. Nature muſt have provided ſome other principle, of more ready, and more general uſe and application; nor can an operation of ſuch immenſe conſequence in life, as that of inferring effects from cauſes, be truſted to the uncertain proceſs of reaſoning and argumentation. Were this doubtful with regard

regard to men, it ſeems to admit of no queſtion with regard to the brute creation; and the concluſion being once firmly eſtabliſhed in the one, we have a ſtrong preſumption, from all the rules of analogy, that it ought to be univerſally admitted, without any exception or reſerve. It is cuſtom alone, which engages animals, from every object that ſtrikes their ſenſes, to infer its uſual attendant, and carries their imagination, from the appearance of the one, to conceive the other, in that particular manner which we denominate Belief. No other explication can be given of this operation, in all the higher, as well as lower, claſſes of ſenſitive beings, which fall under our notice and obſervation *.

But though animals learn many parts of their knowledge from obſervation, there are alſo many parts of it which they derive from the original hand of nature; which much exceed the ſhare of capacity they poſſeſs on ordinary occaſions, and in which they improve little or nothing by the longeſt practice and experience. Theſe we denominate INSTINCTS, and are ſo apt to admire, as ſomething very extraordinary, and inexplicable by all the diſquiſitions of human underſtanding. But our wonder will perhaps ceaſe or diminiſh, when we conſider, that the experimental reaſoning itſelf, which we poſſeſs in common with beaſts, and on which the whole conduct of life depends, is nothing but a ſpecies of inſtinct or mechanical power, that acts in us unknown to ourſelves; and in its chief operations is not directed by any ſuch relations or compariſons of ideas, as are the proper objects of our intellectual faculties. Though the inſtinct be different, yet ſtill it is an inſtinct which teaches a man to avoid the fire; as much as

* See Note [H].

as that which teaches a bird, with ſuch exactneſs, the art of incubation, and the whole œconomy and order of its nurſery.

SECTION X.

Of Miracles.

PART I.

THERE is, in Dr Tillotſon's writings, an argument againſt the real preſence, which is as conciſe, and elegant, and ſtrong, as any argument can poſſibly be ſuppoſed againſt a doctrine, ſo little worthy of a ſerious refutation. It is acknowledged on all hands, ſays that learned prelate, that the authority, either of the ſcripture or of tradition, is founded merely on the teſtimony of the apoſtles, who were eye-witneſſes to thoſe miracles of our Saviour, by which he proved his divine miſſion. Our evidence, then, for the truth of the Chriſtian religion, is leſs than the evidence for the truth of our ſenſes; becauſe, even in the firſt authors of our religion, it was no greater; and it is evident it muſt diminiſh, in paſſing from them to their diſciples; nor can any one reſt ſuch confidence in their teſtimony, as in the immediate object of his ſenſes. But a weaker evidence can never deſtroy a ſtronger; and therefore, were the doctrine of the real preſence ever ſo clearly revealed in ſcripture, it were directly contrary to the rules of juſt reaſoning to give our aſſent to it. It contradicts ſenſe, though both the ſcripture and tradition,

on

on which it is ſuppoſed to be built, carry not ſuch evidence with them as ſenſe; when they are conſidered merely as external evidences, and are not brought home to every one's breaſt, by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit.

Nothing is ſo convenient as a deciſive argument of this kind, which muſt at leaſt ſilence the moſt arrogant bigotry and ſuperſtition, and free us from their impertinent ſolicitations. I flatter myſelf, that I have diſcovered an argument of a like nature, which, if juſt, will, with the wiſe and learned, be an everlaſting check to all kinds of ſuperſtitious deluſion, and conſequently will be uſeful as long as the world endures. For ſo long, I preſume, will the accounts of miracles and prodigies be found in all hiſtory, ſacred and profane.

Though experience be our only guide in reaſoning concerning matters of fact, it muſt be acknowledged, that this guide is not altogether infallible, but, in ſome caſes, is apt to lead us into errors. One who, in our climate, ſhould expect better weather in any week of June than in one of December, would reaſon juſtly and conformably to experience; but it is certain, that he may happen, in the event, to find himſelf miſtaken. However, we may obſerve, that, in ſuch a caſe, he would have no cauſe to complain of experience; becauſe it commonly informs us beforehand of the uncertainty, by that contrariety of events, which we may learn from a diligent obſervation. All effects follow not with like certainty from their ſuppoſed cauſes. Some events are found, in all countries and all ages, to have been conſtantly conjoined together: others are found to have been more variable, and ſometimes to diſappoint our expectations; ſo that, in our reaſonings concerning matter of fact, there are all imaginable degrees

grees of aſſurance, from the higheſt certainty to the loweſt ſpecies of moral evidence.

A wiſe man, therefore, proportions his belief to the evidence. In ſuch concluſions as are founded on an infallible experience, he expects the event with the laſt degree of aſſurance, and regards his paſt experience as a full proof of the future exiſtence of that event. In other caſes, he proceeds with more caution: he weighs the oppoſite experiments: he conſiders which ſide is ſupported by the greater number of experiments: to that ſide he inclines, with doubt and heſitation; and when at laſt he fixes his judgment, the evidence exceeds not what we properly call Probability. All probability, then, ſuppoſes an oppoſition of experiments and obſervations, where the one ſide is found to overbalance the other, and to produce a degree of evidence proportioned to the ſuperiority. A hundred inſtances or experiments on one ſide, and fifty on another, afford a doubtful expectation of any event; though a hundred uniform experiments, with only one that is contradictory, reaſonably beget a pretty ſtrong degree of aſſurance. In all caſes, we muſt balance the oppoſite experiments, where they are oppoſite, and deduct the ſmaller number from the greater, in order to know the exact force of the ſuperior evidence.

To apply theſe principles to a particular inſtance, we may obſerve, that there is no ſpecies of reaſoning more common, more uſeful, and even neceſſary to human life, than that which is derived from the teſtimony of men, and the reports of eye-witneſſes and ſpectators. This ſpecies of reaſoning, perhaps, one may deny to be founded on the relation of cauſe and effect. I ſhall not diſpute about a word. It will be ſufficient to obſerve, that our aſſurance in any argument of this kind, is

is derived from no other principle than our obſervation of the veracity of human teſtimony, and of the uſual conformity of facts to the reports of witneſſes. It being a general maxim, that no objects have any diſcoverable connexion together, and that all the inferences which we can draw from one to another, are founded merely on our experience of their conſtant and regular conjunction; it is evident, that we ought not to make an exception to this maxim in favour of human teſtimony, whoſe connexion with any event ſeems, in itſelf, as little neceſſary as any other. Were not the memory tenacious to a certain degree; had not men commonly an inclination to truth and a principle of probity; were they not ſenſible to ſhame, when detected in a falſehood: were not theſe, I ſay, diſcovered by experience to be qualities inherent in human nature, we ſhould never repoſe the leaſt confidence in human teſtimony. A man delirious, or noted for falſehood and villany, has no manner of authority with us.

And as the evidence, derived from witneſſes and human teſtimony, is founded on paſt experience, ſo it varies with the experience, and is regarded either as a proof or a probability, according as the conjunction between any particular kind of report, and any kind of object, has been found to be conſtant or variable. There are a number of circumſtances to be taken into conſideration, in all judgments of this kind; and the ultimate ſtandard, by which we determine all diſputes, that may ariſe concerning them, is always derived from experience and obſervation. Where this experience is not entirely uniform on any ſide, it is attended with an unavoidable contrariety in our judgments, and with the ſame oppoſition and mutual deſtruction of argument as in every other kind of evidence. We frequently heſi-

tate

ſtate concerning the reports of others. We balance the oppoſite circumſtances which cauſe any doubt or uncertainty; and when we diſcover a ſuperiority on any ſide, we incline to it; but ſtill with a diminution of aſſurance, in proportion to the force of its antagoniſt.

This contrariety of evidence, in the preſent caſe, may be derived from ſeveral different cauſes; from the oppoſition of contrary teſtimony; from the character or number of the witneſſes; from the manner of their delivering their teſtimony; or from the union of all theſe circumſtances. We entertain a ſuſpicion concerning any matter of fact, when the witneſſes contradict each other; when they are but few, or of a doubtful character; when they have an intereſt in what they affirm; when they deliver their teſtimony with heſitation, or, on the contrary, with too violent aſſeverations. There are many other particulars of the ſame kind, which may diminiſh or deſtroy the force of any argument derived from human teſtimony.

Suppoſe, for inſtance, that the fact, which the teſtimony endeavours to eſtabliſh, partakes of the extraordinary and the marvellous; in that caſe, the evidence reſulting from the teſtimony admits of a diminution greater or leſs, in proportion as the fact is more or leſs unuſual. The reaſon why we place any credit in witneſſes and hiſtorians, is not derived from any connexion which we perceive, *à priori*, between teſtimony and reality, but becauſe we are accuſtomed to find a conformity between them. But when the fact atteſted is ſuch a one as has ſeldom fallen under our obſervation, here is a conteſt of two oppoſite experiences, of which the one deſtroys the other as far as its force goes; and the ſuperior can only operate on the mind

by

by the force which remains. The very ſame principle of experience which gives us a certain degree of aſſurance in the teſtimony of witneſſes, gives us alſo, in this caſe, another degree of aſſurance againſt the fact which they endeavour to eſtabliſh; from which contradiction there neceſſarily ariſe a counterpoiſe, and mutual deſtruction of belief and authority.

'I ſhould not believe ſuch a ſtory, were it told me by Cato,' was a proverbial ſaying in Rome, even during the lifetime of that philoſophical patriot *. The incredibility of a fact, it was allowed, might invalidate ſo great an authority.

The Indian prince, who refuſed to believe the firſt relations concerning the effects of froſt, reaſoned juſtly; and it naturally required very ſtrong teſtimony to engage his aſſent to facts that aroſe from a ſtate of nature with which he was unacquainted, and which bore ſo little analogy to thoſe events of which he had had conſtant and uniform experience. Though they were not contrary to his experience, they were not conformable to it ‡.

But, in order to increaſe the probability againſt the teſtimony of witneſſes, let us ſuppoſe, that the fact which they affirm, inſtead of being only marvellous, is really miraculous; and ſuppoſe alſo, that the teſtimony, conſidered apart and in itſelf, amounts to an entire proof; in that caſe, there is proof againſt proof, of which the ſtrongeſt muſt prevail, but ſtill with a diminution of its force, in proportion to that of its antagoniſt.

A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has eſtabliſhed theſe laws, the proof againſt a miracle, from the very

* Plutarch in vita Catonis. ‡ See Note [I].

nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can poſſibly be imagined. Why is it more than probable, that all men muſt die; that lead cannot of itſelf remain ſuſpended in the air; that fire conſumes wood, and is extinguiſhed by water; unleſs it be, that theſe events are found agreeable to the laws of nature, and there is required a violation of theſe laws, or, in other words, a miracle, to prevent them? Nothing is eſteemed a miracle, if it ever happen in the common courſe of nature. It is no miracle that a man ſeemingly in good health ſhould die on a ſudden; becauſe ſuch a kind of death, though more unuſual than any other, has yet been frequently obſerved to happen. But it is a miracle, that a dead man ſhould come to life; becauſe that has never been obſerved in any age or country. There muſt, therefore, be a uniform experience againſt every miraculous event, otherwiſe the event would not merit that appellation. And as an uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full proof, from the nature of the fact, againſt the exiſtence of any miracle; nor can ſuch a proof be deſtroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, but by an oppoſite proof, which is ſuperior *.

The plain conſequence is (and it is a general maxim worthy of our attention), 'That no teſtimony is ſufficient to eſtabliſh a miracle, unleſs the teſtimony be of ſuch a kind, that its falſehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavours to eſtabliſh: and, even in that caſe, there is a mutual deſtruction of arguments; and the ſuperior only gives us an aſſurance ſuitable to that degree of force which remains after deducting the inferior.' When any one tells me, that he ſaw a dead man reſtored to life, I immediately conſider

* See Note [K].

ſider with myſelf, whether it be more probable that this perſon ſhould either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact which he relates ſhould really have happened. I weigh the one miracle againſt the other; and according to the ſuperiority which I diſcover, I pronounce my deciſion, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falſehood of his teſtimony would be more miraculous than the event which he relates; then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion.

PART II.

In the foregoing reaſoning we have ſuppoſed, that the teſtimony, upon which a miracle is founded, may poſſibly amount to an entire proof, and that the falſehood of that teſtimony would be a real prodigy: But it is eaſy to ſhow, that we have been a great deal too liberal in our conceſſions, and that there never was a miraculous event eſtabliſhed on ſo full an evidence.

For, firſt, There is not to be found, in all hiſtory, any miracle atteſted by a ſufficient number of men, of ſuch unqueſtioned good ſenſe, education, and learning, as to ſecure us againſt all deluſion in themſelves; of ſuch undoubted integrity, as to place them beyond all ſuſpicion of any deſign to deceive others; of ſuch credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to loſe in caſe of their being detected in any falſehood; and at the ſame time, atteſting facts performed in ſuch a public manner, and in ſo celebrated a part of the world, as to render the detection unavoidable: All which circumſtances are requiſite to give us a full aſſurance in the teſtimony of men.

Secondly, We may obſerve in human nature a principle, which, if ſtrictly examined, will be found to diminiſh extremely the aſſurance which we might, from human teſtimony, have in any kind of prodigy. The maxim, by which we commonly conduct ourſelves in our reaſonings, is, that the objects, of which we have no experience, reſemble thoſe of which we have; that what we have found to be moſt uſual, is always moſt probable; and that where there is an oppoſition of arguments, we ought to give the preference to ſuch as are founded on the greateſt number of paſt obſervations: But though, in proceeding by this rule, we readily reject any fact which is unuſual and incredible in an ordinary degree; yet, in advancing farther, the mind obſerves not always the ſame rule; but, when any thing is affirmed utterly abſurd and miraculous, it rather the more readily admits of ſuch a fact, upon account of that very circumſtance which ought to deſtroy all its authority. The paſſion of ſurpriſe and wonder, ariſing from miracles, being an agreeable emotion, gives a ſenſible tendency towards the belief of thoſe events from which it is derived. And this goes ſo far, that even thoſe who cannot enjoy this pleaſure immediately, nor can believe thoſe miraculous events of which they are informed, yet love to partake of the ſatisfaction at ſecond-hand or by rebound, and place a pride and delight in exciting the admiration of others.

With what greedineſs are the miraculous accounts of travellers received, their deſcriptions of ſea and land monſters, their relations of wonderful adventures, ſtrange men, and uncouth manners? But if the ſpirit of religion join itſelf to the love of wonder, there is an end of common ſenſe; and human teſtimony, in theſe circumſtances, loſes all pretenſions to authority. A religioniſt

ligioniſt may be an enthuſiaſt, and imagine he ſees what has no reality: He may know his narrative to be falſe, and yet perſevere in it with the beſt intentions in the world, for the ſake of promoting ſo holy a cauſe: or, even where this deluſion has not place, vanity, excited by ſo ſtrong a temptation, operates on him more powerfully than on the reſt of mankind in any other circumſtances; and ſelf-intereſt with equal force. His auditors may not have, and commonly have not, ſufficient judgment to canvaſs his evidence; What judgment they have, they renounce by principle, in theſe ſublime and myſterious ſubjects; or, if they were ever ſo willing to employ it, paſſion and a heated imagination, diſturb the regularity of its operations. Their credulity increaſes his impudence; and his impudence overpowers their credulity.

Eloquence, when at its higheſt pitch, leaves little room for reaſon or reflection; but, addreſſing itſelf entirely to the fancy or the affections, captivates the willing hearers, and ſubdues their underſtanding. Happily, this pitch it ſeldom attains. But what a Tully or a Demoſthenes could ſcarcely effect over a Roman or Athenian audience, every capuchin, every itinerant or ſtationary teacher, can perform over the generality of mankind, and in a higher degree, by touching ſuch groſs and vulgar paſſions.

The many inſtances of forged miracles and prophecies, and ſupernatural events, which, in all ages, have either been detected by contrary evidence, or which detect themſelves by their abſurdity, prove ſufficiently the ſtrong propenſity of mankind to the extraordinary and the marvellous, and ought reaſonably to beget a ſuſpicion againſt all relations of this kind. This is our natural way of thinking, even with regard to the moſt

common and moſt credible events. For inſtance, there is no kind of report which riſes ſo eaſily, and ſpreads ſo quickly, eſpecially in country places and provincial towns, as thoſe concerning marriages: inſomuch, that two young perſons of equal condition never ſee each other twice, but the whole neighbourhood immediately join them together. The pleaſure of telling a piece of news ſo intereſting, of propagating it, and of being the firſt reporters of it, ſpreads the intelligence. And this is ſo well known, that no man of ſenſe gives attention to theſe reports, till he find them confirmed by ſome greater evidence. Do not the ſame paſſions, and others ſtill ſtronger, incline the generality of mankind to believe and report, with the greateſt vehemence and aſſurance, all religious miracles?

Thirdly, It forms a ſtrong preſumption againſt all ſupernatural and miraculous relations, that they are obſerved chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations; or, if a civilized people has ever given admiſſion to any of them, that people will be found to have received them from ignorant and barbarous anceſtors, who tranſmitted them with that inviolable ſanction and authority which always attend received opinions. When we peruſe the firſt hiſtories of all nations, we are apt to imagine ourſelves tranſported into ſome new world; where the whole frame of nature is disjointed, and every element performs its operations in a different manner from what it does at preſent. Battles, revolutions, peſtilence, famine, and death, are never the effect of thoſe natural cauſes which we experience. Prodigies, omens, oracles, judgments, quite obſcure the few natural events that are intermingled with them. But as the former grow thinner every page, in proportion as we advance nearer the enlightened ages,

we

we ſoon learn, that there is nothing myſterious or ſupernatural in the caſe, but that all proceeds from the uſual propenſity of mankind towards the marvellous; and that, though this inclination may at intervals receive a check from ſenſe and learning, it can never be thoroughly extirpated from human nature.

'It is ſtrange', a judicious reader is apt to ſay, upon the peruſal of theſe wonderful hiſtorians, 'that ſuch prodigious events never happen in our days.' But it is nothing ſtrange, I hope, that men ſhould lie in all ages. You muſt ſurely have ſeen inſtances enow of that frailty. You have yourſelf heard many ſuch marvellous relations ſtarted, which, being treated with ſcorn by all the wiſe and judicious, have at laſt been abandoned even by the vulgar. Be aſſured, that thoſe renowned lies, which have ſpread and flouriſhed to ſuch a monſtrous height, aroſe from like beginnings; but, being ſown in a more proper ſoil, ſhot up at laſt into prodigies almoſt equal to thoſe which they relate.

It was a wiſe policy in that falſe prophet Alexander, who, though now forgotten, was once ſo famous, to lay the firſt ſcene of his impoſtures in Paphlagonia, where, as Lucian tells us, the people were extremely ignorant and ſtupid, and ready to ſwallow even the groſſeſt deluſion. People at a diſtance, who are weak enough to think the matter at all worth inquiry, have no opportunity of receiving better information. The ſtories come magnified to them by a hundred circumſtances. Fools are induſtrious in propagating the impoſture; while the wiſe and learned are contented, in general, to deride its abſurdity, without informing themſelves of the particular facts by which it may be diſtinctly refuted. And thus the impoſtor above-mentioned was enabled to proceed, from his ignorant Paphlagonians, to the

enliſting of votaries, even among the Grecian philoſophers, and men of the moſt eminent rank and diſtinction in Rome: Nay, could engage the attention of that ſage emperor Marcus Aurelius; ſo far as to make him truſt the ſucceſs of a military expedition to his deluſive prophecies.

The advantages are ſo great, of ſtarting an impoſture among an ignorant people, that, even though the deluſion ſhould be too groſs to impoſe on the generality of them (which, though ſeldom, is ſometimes the caſe), it has a much better chance for ſucceeding in remote countries, than if the firſt ſcene had been laid in a city renowned for arts and knowledge. The moſt ignorant and barbarous of theſe barbarians carry the report abroad. None of their countrymen have a large correſpondence, or ſufficient credit and authority to contradict and beat down the deluſion. Mens inclination to the marvellous, has full opportunity to diſplay itſelf. And thus a ſtory, which is univerſally exploded in the place where it was firſt ſtarted, ſhall paſs for certain at a thouſand miles diſtance. But, had Alexander fixed his reſidence at Athens, the philoſophers of that renowned mart of learning had immediately ſpread, throughout the whole Roman empire, their ſenſe of the matter; which, being ſupported by ſo great authority, and diſplayed by all the force of reaſon and eloquence, had entirely opened the eyes of mankind. It is true, Lucian, paſſing by chance through Paphlagonia, had an opportunity of performing this good office. But, though much to be wiſhed, it does not always happen, that every Alexander meets with a Lucian, ready to expoſe and detect his impoſtures.

I may add as a fourth reaſon, which diminiſhes the authority of prodigies, that there is no teſtimony for any,

any, even thoſe which have not been expreſsly detected, that is not oppoſed by an infinite number of witneſſes; ſo that not only the miracle deſtroys the credit of teſtimony, but the teſtimony deſtroys itſelf. To make this the better underſtood, let us conſider, that, in matters of religion, whatever is different is contrary; and that it is impoſſible the religions of ancient Rome, of Turkey, of Siam, and of China, ſhould, all of them, be eſtabliſhed on any ſolid foundation. Every miracle, therefore, pretended to have been wrought in any of theſe religions, (and all of them abound in miracles), as its direct ſcope is to eſtabliſh the particular ſyſtem to which it is attributed; ſo has it the ſame force, though more indirectly, to overthrow every other ſyſtem. In deſtroying a rival ſyſtem, it likewiſe deſtroys the credit of thoſe miracles on which that ſyſtem was eſtabliſhed; ſo that all the prodigies of different religions are to be regarded as contrary facts; and the evidences of theſe prodigies, whether weak or ſtrong, as oppoſite to each other. According to this method of reaſoning, when we believe any miracle of Mahomet or his ſucceſſors, we have for our warrant the teſtimony of a few barbarous Arabians: And, on the other hand, we are to regard the authority of Titus Livius, Plutarch, Tacitus, and, in ſhort, of all the authors and witneſſes, Grecian, Chineſe, and Roman Catholic, who have related any miracle in their particular religion; I ſay, we are to regard their teſtimony in the ſame light as if they had mentioned that Mahometan miracle, and had in expreſs terms contradicted it, with the ſame certainty as they have for the miracle they relate. This argument may appear over ſubtile and refined; but is not in reality different from the reaſoning of a judge, who

ſuppoſes,

ſuppoſes, that the credit of two witneſſes, maintaining a crime againſt any one, is deſtroyed by the teſtimony of two others, who affirm him to have been two hundred leagues diſtant, at the ſame inſtant when the crime is ſaid to have been committed.

One of the beſt atteſted miracles in all profane hiſtory, is that which Tacitus reports of Veſpaſian, who cured a blind man in Alexandria, by means of his ſpittle, and a lame man by the mere touch of his foot; in obedience to a viſion of the god Serapis, who had enjoined them to have recourſe to the Emperor for theſe miraculous cures. The ſtory may be ſeen in that fine hiſtorian *; where every circumſtance ſeems to add weight to the teſtimony, and might be diſplayed at large with all the force of argument and eloquence, if any one were now concerned to enforce the evidence of that exploded and idolatrous ſuperſtition. The gravity, ſolidity, age, and probity of ſo great an emperor, who, through the whole courſe of his life, converſed in a familiar manner with his friends and courtiers, and never affected thoſe extraordinary airs of divinity aſſumed by Alexander and Demetrius: The hiſtorian, a cotemporary writer, noted for candour and veracity, and withal the greateſt and moſt penetrating genius, perhaps, of all antiquity; and ſo free from any tendency to credulity, that he even lies under the contrary imputation, of atheiſm and profaneneſs: The perſons, from whoſe authority he related the miracle, of eſtabliſhed character for judgement and veracity, as we may well preſume; eye-witneſſes of the fact, and confirming their teſtimony, after the Flavian family was deſpoiled of the empire;

* Hiſt. lib. v. cap. 8. Suetonius gives nearly the ſame account *in vita Veſp.*

empire, and could no longer give any reward as the price of a lie. *Utrumque, qui interfuere, nunc quoque memorant, poſtquam nullum mendacio pretium.* To which if we add the public nature of the facts, as related, it will appear, that no evidence can well be ſuppoſed ſtronger for ſo groſs and ſo palpable a falſehood.

There is alſo a memorable ſtory related by Cardinal de Retz, which may well deſerve our conſideration. When that intriguing politician fled into Spain, to avoid the perſecution of his enemies, he paſſed through Saragoſſa, the capital of Arragon, where he was ſhown in the cathedral, a man, who had ſerved ſeven years as a door-keeper, and was well known to every body in town that had ever paid his devotions at that church. He had been ſeen, for ſo long a time, wanting a leg; but recovered that limb by the rubbing of holy oil upon the ſtump; and the cardinal aſſures us, that he ſaw him with two legs. This miracle was vouched by all the canons of the church; and the whole company in town were appealed to for a confirmation of the fact; whom the cardinal found, by their zealous devotion, to be thorough believers of the miracle. Here the relater was alſo cotemporary to the ſuppoſed prodigy, of an incredulous and libertine character, as well as of great genius; the miracle of ſo ſingular a nature as could ſcarcely admit of a counterfeit, and the witneſſes very numerous, and all of them in a manner ſpectators of the fact to which they gave their teſtimony. And, what adds mightily to the force of the evidence, and may double our ſurpriſe on this occaſion, is, that the cardinal himſelf, who relates the ſtory, ſeems not to give any credit to it, and conſequently cannot be ſuſpected of any concurrence in the holy fraud. He conſidered juſtly, that it was not requiſite, in order to reject

ject a fact of this nature, to be able accurately to disprove the teſtimony, and to trace its falſehood, through all the circumſtances of knavery and credulity which produced it. He knew, that, as this was commonly altogether impoſſible at any ſmall diſtance of time and place; ſo was it extremely difficult, even where one was immediately preſent, by reaſon of the bigotry, ignorance, cunning, and roguery of a great part of mankind. He therefore concluded, like a juſt reaſoner, that ſuch an evidence carried falſehood upon the very face of it; and that a miracle, ſupported by any human teſtimony, was more properly a ſubject of deriſion than of argument.

There ſurely never was a greater number of miracles aſcribed to one perſon, than thoſe which were lately ſaid to have been wrought in France upon the tomb of Abbé Paris, the famous Janſeniſt, with whoſe ſanctity the people were ſo long deluded. The curing of the ſick, giving hearing to the deaf, and ſight to the blind, were every where talked of as the uſual effects of that holy ſepulchre. But what is more extraordinary, many of the miracles were immediately proved upon the ſpot, before judges of unqueſtioned integrity, atteſted by witneſſes of credit and diſtinction, in a learned age, and on the moſt eminent theatre that is now in the world. Nor is this all: A relation of them was publiſhed and diſperſed every where; nor were the Jeſuits, though a learned body, ſupported by the civil magiſtrate, and determined enemies to thoſe opinions, in whoſe favour the miracles were ſaid to have been wrought, ever able diſtinctly to refute or detect them *. Where ſhall we find ſuch a number of circumſtances, agreeing to the corroboration of one fact? And what have

* See Note [L].

have we to oppoſe to ſuch a cloud of witneſſes, but the abſolute impoſſibility, or miraculous nature of the events which they relate? And this, ſurely, in the eyes of all reaſonable people, will alone be regarded as a ſufficient refutation.

Is the conſequence juſt, becauſe ſome human teſtimony has the utmoſt force and authority in ſome caſes, when it relates the battle of Philippi or Pharſalia, for inſtance; that therefore all kinds of teſtimony muſt, in all caſes, have equal force and authority? Suppoſe that the Cæſarean and Pompeian factions had, each of them, claimed the victory in theſe battles, and that the hiſtorians of each party had uniformly aſcribed the advantage to their own ſide; how could mankind, at this diſtance, have been able to determine between them? The contrariety is equally ſtrong between the miracles related by Herodotus or Plutarch, and thoſe delivered by Mariana, Bede, or any monkiſh hiſtorian.

The wiſe lend a very academic faith to every report which favours the paſſion of the reporter; whether it magnifies his country, his family, or himſelf, or in any other way ſtrikes in with his natural inclinations and propenſities. But what greater temptation than to appear a miſſionary, a prophet, an ambaſſador from heaven? Who would not encounter many dangers and difficulties, in order to attain ſo ſublime a character? Or if, by the help of vanity and a heated imagination, a man has firſt made a convert of himſelf, and entered ſeriouſly into the deluſion; whoever ſcruples to make uſe of pious frauds, in ſupport of ſo holy and meritorious a cauſe?

The ſmalleſt ſpark may here kindle into the greateſt flame; becauſe the materials are always prepared for it.

it. The *avidum genus auricularum* *, the gaping populace, receive greedily, without examination, whatever soothes superstition, and promotes wonder.

How many stories of this nature, have, in all ages, been detected and exploded in their infancy? How many more have been celebrated for a time, and have afterwards sunk into neglect and oblivion? Where such reports, therefore, fly about, the solution of the phænomenon is obvious; and we judge in conformity to regular experience and observation, when we account for it by the known and natural principles of credulity and delusion. And shall we, rather than have a recourse to so natural a solution, allow of a miraculous violation of the most established laws of nature?

I need not mention the difficulty of detecting a falsehood in any private or even public history, at the place where it is said to happen; much more when the scene is removed to ever so small a distance. Even a court of judicature, with all the authority, accuracy, and judgment which they can employ, find themselves often at a loss to distinguish between truth and falsehood in the most recent actions. But the matter never comes to any issue, if trusted to the common method of altercation and debate and flying rumours; especially when mens passions have taken part on either side.

In the infancy of new religions, the wise and learned commonly esteem the matter too inconsiderable to deserve their attention or regard. And when afterwards they would willingly detect the cheat, in order to undeceive the deluded multitude, the season is now past, and the records and witnesses, which might clear up the matter, have perished beyond recovery.

No

* Lucret.

No means of detection remain, but thoſe which muſt be drawn from the very teſtimony itſelf of the reporters; and theſe, though always ſufficient with the judicious and knowing, are commonly too fine to fall under the comprehenſion of the vulgar,

Upon the whole, then, it appears, that no teſtimony for any kind of miracle, has ever amounted to a probability, much leſs to a proof; and that, even ſuppoſing it amounted to a proof, it would be oppoſed by another proof, derived from the very nature of the fact which it would endeavour to eſtabliſh. It is experience only which gives authority to human teſtimony; and it is the ſame experience which aſſures us of the laws of nature. When, therefore, theſe two kinds of experience are contrary, we have nothing to do but ſubtract the one from the other, and embrace an opinion, either on one ſide or the other, with that aſſurance which ariſes from the remainder. But according to the principle here explained, this ſubtraction, with regard to all popular religions, amounts to an entire annihilation; and therefore we may eſtabliſh it as a maxim, that no human teſtimony can have ſuch force as to prove a miracle, and make it a juſt foundation for any ſuch ſyſtem of religion.

I beg the limitations here made may be remarked, when I ſay, that a miracle can never be proved, ſo as to be the foundation of a ſyſtem of religion. For I own, that otherwiſe, there may poſſibly be miracles or violations of the uſual courſe of nature, of ſuch a kind as to admit of proof from human teſtimony; though perhaps it will be impoſſible to find any ſuch in all the records of hiſtory. Thus, ſuppoſe all authors, in all languages, agree, that, from the firſt of January 1600, there was a total darkneſs over the whole earth for

eight

eight days: Suppoſe that the tradition of this extraordinary event is ſtill ſtrong and lively among the people: That all travellers, who return from foreign countries, bring us accounts of the ſame tradition, without the leaſt variation or contradiction; it is evident, that our preſent philoſophers, inſtead of doubting the fact, ought to receive it as certain, and ought to ſearch for the cauſes whence it might be derived. The decay, corruption, and diſſolution of nature, is an event rendered probable by ſo many analogies, that any phænomenon which ſeems to have a tendency towards that cataſtrophe, comes within the reach of human teſtimony, if that teſtimony be very extenſive and uniform.

But, ſuppoſe that all the hiſtorians who treat of England ſhould agree, that, on the firſt of January 1600, Queen Elizabeth died; that both before and after her death ſhe was ſeen by her phyſicians and the whole court, as is uſual with perſons of her rank; that her ſucceſſor was acknowledged and proclaimed by the parliament; and that, after being interred a month, ſhe again appeared, reſumed the throne, and governed England for three years;—I muſt confeſs, that I ſhould be ſurpriſed at the concurrence of ſo many odd circumſtances, but ſhould not have the leaſt inclination to believe ſo miraculous an event. I ſhould not doubt of her pretended death, and of thoſe other public circumſtances that followed it: I ſhould only aſſert it to have been pretended, and that it neither was, nor poſſibly could be real. You would in vain object to me the difficulty, and almoſt impoſſibility, of deceiving the world in an affair of ſuch conſequence. The wiſdom and ſolid judgment of that renowned queen, with the little or no advantage which ſhe could reap from ſo poor an artifice: all this might aſtoniſh me; but I would ſtill reply,

ply, that the knavery and folly of men, are ſuch common phænomena, that I ſhould rather believe the moſt extraordinary events to ariſe from their concurrence, than admit of ſo ſignal a violation of the laws of nature.

But, ſhould this miracle be aſcribed to any new ſyſtem of religion; men in all ages have been ſo much impoſed on by ridiculous ſtories of that kind, that this very circumſtance would be a full proof of a cheat, and ſufficient, with all men of ſenſe, not only to make them reject the fact, but even reject it without farther examination. Though the Being, to whom the miracle is aſcribed, be in this caſe Almighty, it does not upon that account become a whit more probable; ſince it is impoſſible for us to know the attributes or actions of ſuch a Being, otherwiſe than from the experience which we have of his productions in the uſual courſe of nature. This ſtill reduces us to paſt obſervation, and obliges us to compare the inſtances of the violation of truth in the teſtimony of men, with thoſe of the violation of the laws of nature by miracles, in order to judge which of them is moſt likely and probable. As the violations of truth are more common in the teſtimony concerning religious miracles, than in that concerning any other matter of fact; this muſt diminiſh very much the authority of the former teſtimony, and make us form a general reſolution, never to lend any attention to it, with whatever ſpecious pretence it may be covered.

Lord Bacon ſeems to have embraced the ſame principles of reaſoning. 'We ought (ſays he) to make 'a collection or particular hiſtory of all monſters 'and prodigious births or productions, and, in a 'word, of every thing new, rare, and extraordinary 'in nature. But this muſt be done with the moſt

'ſevere ſcrutiny, leſt we depart from truth. Above 'all, every relation muſt be conſidered as ſuſpicious, 'which depends in any degree upon religion, as the 'prodigies of Livy: and no leſs ſo, every thing that is 'to be found in the writers of natural magic or alchy-'my, or ſuch authors who ſeem, all of them, to have 'an unconquerable appetite for falſehood and fable *.'

I am the better pleaſed with the method of reaſoning here delivered, as I think it may ſerve to confound thoſe dangerous friends, or diſguiſed enemies to the Chriſtian religion, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reaſon. Our moſt holy religion is founded on Faith, not on reaſon; and it is a ſure method of expoſing it, to put it to ſuch a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure. To make this more evident, let us examine thoſe miracles related in ſcripture; and, not to loſe ourſelves in too wide a field, let us confine ourſelves to ſuch as we find in the Pentateuch, which we ſhall examine according to the principles of theſe pretended Chriſtians, not as the word or teſtimony of God himſelf, but as the production of a mere human writer and hiſtorian. Here then we are firſt to conſider a book, preſented to us by a barbarous and ignorant people, written in an age when they were ſtill more barbarous, and in all probability long after the facts which it relates, corroborated by no concurring teſtimony, and reſembling thoſe fabulous accounts which every nation gives of its origin. Upon reading this book, we find it full of prodigies and miracles. It gives an account of a ſtate of the world and of human nature entirely different from the preſent: of our fall from that ſtate; of the age of man extended to near a thouſand years; of the deſtruction of the world by a deluge;

* Nov. Org. lib. ii. aph. 29.

deluge; of the arbitrary choice of one people, as the favourites of heaven, and that people the countrymen of the author; of their deliverance from bondage by prodigies the moſt aſtoniſhing imaginable: I deſire any one to lay his hand upon his heart, and, after a ſerious conſideration, declare, whether he thinks that the falſehood of ſuch a book, ſupported by ſuch a teſtimony, would be more extraordinary and miraculous than all the miracles it relates; which is, however, neceſſary to make it be received according to the meaſures of probability above eſtabliſhed.

What we have ſaid of miracles, may be applied, without any variation, to prophecies; and indeed, all prophecies are real miracles; and, as ſuch only, can be admitted as proofs of any relevation. If it did not exceed the capacity of human nature to foretel future events, it would be abſurd to employ any prophecy as an argument for a divine miſſion or authority from heaven: ſo that, upon the whole, we may conclude, that the Chriſtian religion not only was at firſt attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reaſonable perſon without one. Mere reaſon is inſufficient to convince us of its veracity; and, whoever is moved by faith to aſſent to it, is conſcious of a continued miracle in his own perſon, which ſubverts all the principles of his underſtanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is moſt contrary to cuſtom and experience.

SECTION XI.

Of a Particular Providence, and of a Future State.

I WAS lately engaged in converſation with a friend who loves ſceptical paradoxes; where, though he advanced many principles of which I can by no means approve, yet as they ſeem to be curious, and to bear ſome relation to the chain of reaſoning carried on throughout this inquiry, I ſhall here copy them from my memory as accurately as I can, in order to ſubmit them to the judgment of the reader.

Our converſation began with my admiring the ſingular good fortune of philoſophy, which, as it requires entire liberty above all other privileges, and chiefly flouriſhes, from the free oppoſition of ſentiments and argumentation, received its firſt birth in an age and country of freedom and toleration, and was never cramped, even in its moſt extravagant principles, by any creeds, confeſſions, or penal ſtatutes. For, except the baniſhment of Protagoras, and the death of Socrates, which laſt event proceeded partly from other motives, there are ſcarcely any inſtances to be met with, in ancient hiſtory, of this bigoted jealouſy with which the preſent age is ſo much infeſted. Epicurus lived at Athens to an advanced age, in peace and tranquillity: Epicureans * were even admitted to receive the ſacerdotal character, and to officiate at the altar, in the moſt ſacred rites

* LUCIANI συμπ. ἢ, λαπίθαι.

rites of the eſtabliſhed religion: And the public encouragement,* of penſions and ſalaries was afforded equally, by the wiſeſt of all the Roman emperors †, to the profeſſors of every ſect of philoſophy. How requiſite ſuch kind of treatment was to philoſophy, in her early youth, will eaſily be conceived, if we reflect, that, even at preſent, when ſhe may be ſuppoſed more hardy and robuſt, ſhe bears with much difficulty the inclemency of the ſeaſons, and thoſe harſh winds of calumny and perſecution which blow upon her.

You admire, ſays my friend, as the ſingular good fortune of philoſophy, what ſeems to reſult from the natural courſe of things, and to be unavoidable in every age and nation. This pertinacious bigotry, of which you complain, as ſo fatal to philoſophy, is really her offspring, who, after allying with ſuperſtition, ſeparates himſelf entirely from the intereſt of his parent, and becomes her moſt inveterate enemy and perſecutor. Speculative dogmas of religion, the preſent occaſions of ſuch furious diſpute, could not poſſibly be conceived or admitted in the early ages of the world; when mankind, being wholly illiterate, formed an idea of religion more ſuitable to their weak apprehenſion, and compoſed their ſacred tenets of ſuch tales chiefly as were the objects of traditional belief, more than of argument or diſputation. After the firſt alarm, therefore, was over, which aroſe from the new paradoxes and principles of the philoſophers; theſe teachers ſeem, ever after, during the ages of antiquity, to have lived in great harmony with the eſtabliſhed ſuperſtition, and to have made a fair partition of mankind between them; the former claiming all the learned and wiſe, the latter poſſeſſing all the vulgar and illiterate.

* Id. ευτυχες. † Id. et Dio.

It ſeems then, ſaid I, that you leave politics entirely out of the queſtion, and never ſuppoſe, that a wiſe magiſtrate can juſtly be jealous of certain tenets of philoſophy, ſuch as thoſe of Epicurus, which, denying a divine exiſtence, and conſequently a providence and a future ſtate, ſeem to looſen, in a great meaſure, the ties of morality, and may be ſuppoſed, for that reaſon, pernicious to the peace of civil ſociety.

I know, replied he, that in fact theſe perſecutions never, in any age, proceeded from calm reaſon, or from experience of the pernicious conſequences of philoſophy, but aroſe entirely from paſſion and prejudice. But what if I ſhould advance farther, and aſſert, that if Epicurus had been accuſed before the people, by any of the ſycophants or informers of thoſe days, he could eaſily have defended his cauſe, and proved his principles of philoſophy to be as ſalutary as thoſe of his adverſaries, who endeavoured, with ſuch zeal, to expoſe him to the public hatred and jealouſy?

I wiſh, ſaid I, you would try your eloquence upon ſo extraordinary a topic, and make a ſpeech for Epicurus which might ſatisfy, not the mob of Athens, if you will allow that ancient and polite city to have contained any mob, but the more philoſophical part of his audience, ſuch as might be ſuppoſed capable of comprehending his arguments.

The matter would not be difficult, upon ſuch conditions, replied he: And if you pleaſe, I ſhall ſuppoſe myſelf Epicurus for a moment, and make you ſtand for the Athenian people, and ſhall deliver you ſuch an harangue as will fill all the urn with white beans, and leave not a black one to gratify the malice of my adverſaries.

Very

Very well: Pray, proceed upon theſe ſuppoſitions.

I come hither, O ye Athenians! to juſtify in your aſſembly what I maintained in my ſchool; and I find myſelf impeached by furious antagoniſts, inſtead of reaſoning with calm and diſpaſſionate inquirers. Your deliberations, which of right ſhould be directed to queſtions of public good, and the intereſt of the commonwealth, are diverted to the diſquiſitions of ſpeculative philoſophy; and theſe magnificent, but perhaps fruitleſs inquiries, take place of your more familiar, but more uſeful occupations. But, ſo far as in me lies, I will prevent this abuſe. We ſhall not here diſpute concerning the origin and government of worlds. We ſhall only inquire how far ſuch queſtions concern the public intereſt: and if I can perſuade you, that they are entirely indifferent to the peace of ſociety and ſecurity of government, I hope that you will preſently ſend us back to our ſchools, there to examine, at leiſure, the queſtion the moſt ſublime, but, at the ſame time, the moſt ſpeculative of all philoſophy.

The religious philoſophers, not ſatisfied with the tradition of your forefathers, and doctrine of your prieſts (in which I willingly acquieſce), indulge a raſh curioſity, in trying how far they can eſtabliſh religion upon the principles of reaſon; and they thereby excite, inſtead of ſatisfying, the doubts which naturally ariſe from a diligent and ſcrutinous inquiry. They paint, in the moſt magnificent colours, the order, beauty, and wiſe arrangement of the univerſe; and then aſk, if ſuch a glorious diſplay of intelligence could proceed from the fortuitous concourſe of atoms; or if chance could produce what the greateſt genius can never ſufficiently admire? I ſhall not examine the juſtneſs of this argument. I ſhall allow it to be as ſolid as my antagoniſts

and accuſers can deſire. It is ſufficient, if I can prove from this very reaſoning, that the queſtion is entirely ſpeculative, and that when, in my philoſophical diſquiſitions, I deny a providence and a future ſtate, I undermine not the foundations of ſociety, but advance principles, which they themſelves, upon their own topics, if they argue conſiſtently, muſt allow to be ſolid and ſatisfactory.

You then, who are my accuſers, have acknowledged, that the chief or ſole argument for a divine exiſtence (which I never queſtioned) is derived from the order of nature; where there appear ſuch marks of intelligence and deſign, that you think it extravagant to aſſign for its cauſe, either chance, or the blind and unguided force of matter. You allow, that this is an argument drawn from effects to cauſes. From the order of the work, you infer, that there muſt have been project and forethought in the workman. If you cannot make out this point, you allow, that your concluſion fails; and you pretend not to eſtabliſh the concluſion in a greater latitude than the phænomena of nature will juſtify. Theſe are your conceſſions. I deſire you to mark the conſequences.

When we infer any particular cauſe from an effect, we muſt proportion the one to the other, and can never be allowed to aſcribe to the cauſe any qualities, but what are exactly ſufficient to produce the effect. A body of ten ounces raiſed in any ſcale, may ſerve as a proof, that the counterbalancing weight exceeds ten ounces; but can never afford a reaſon that it exceeds a hundred. If the cauſe, aſſigned for any effect, be not ſufficient to produce it, we muſt either reject that cauſe, or add to it ſuch qualities as will give it a juſt proportion to the effect. But if we aſcribe to it farther

ther qualities, or affirm it capable of producing other effects, we can only indulge the licence of conjecture, and arbitrarily ſuppoſe the exiſtence of qualities and energies without reaſon or authority.

The ſame rule holds, whether the cauſe aſſigned be brute unconſcious matter, or a rational intelligent being. If the cauſe be known only by the effect, we never ought to aſcribe to it any qualities beyond what are preciſely requiſite to produce the effect: Nor can we, by any rules of juſt reaſoning, return back from the cauſe, and infer other effects from it, beyond thoſe by which alone it is known to us. No one, merely from the ſight of one of Zeuxis's pictures, could know, that he was alſo a ſtatuary or architect, and was an artiſt no leſs ſkilful in ſtone and marble than in colours. The talents and taſte, diſplayed in the particular work before us; theſe we may ſafely conclude the workman to be poſſeſſed of. The cauſe muſt be proportioned to the effect; and if we exactly and preciſely proportion it, we ſhall never find in it any qualities that point farther, or afford an inference concerning any other deſign or performance. Such qualities muſt be ſomewhat beyond what is merely requiſite for producing the effect which we examine.

Allowing, therefore, the gods to be the authors of the exiſtence or order of the univerſe; it follows, that they poſſeſs that preciſe degree of power, intelligence, and benevolence, which appears in their workmanſhip; but nothing farther can ever be proved, except we call in the aſſiſtance of exaggeration and flattery, to ſupply the defects of argument and reaſoning. So far as the traces of any attributes at preſent appear, ſo far may we conclude theſe attributes to exiſt. The ſuppoſition of farther attributes is mere hypotheſis; much more the

ſuppoſition,

ſuppoſition, that, in diſtant regions of ſpace or periods of time, there has been, or will be, a more magnificent diſplay of theſe attributes, and a ſcheme of adminiſtration more ſuitable to ſuch imaginary virtues. We can never be allowed to mount up from the univerſe, the effect, to Jupiter, the cauſe; and then deſcend downwards, to infer any new effect from that cauſe; as if the preſent effects alone were not entirely worthy of the glorious attributes which we aſcribe to that deity. The knowledge of the cauſe being derived ſolely from the effect, they muſt be exactly adjuſted to each other; and the one can never refer to any thing farther, or be the foundation of any new inference and concluſion.

You find certain phænomena in nature. You ſeek a cauſe or author. You imagine that you have found him. You afterwards become ſo enamoured of this offſpring of your brain, that you imagine it impoſſible, but he muſt produce ſomething greater and more perfect than the preſent ſcene of things, which is ſo full of ill and diſorder. You forget, that this ſuperlative intelligence and benevolence are entirely imaginary, or, at leaſt, without any foundation in reaſon; and that you have no ground to aſcribe to him any qualities, but what you ſee he has actually exerted and diſplayed in his productions. Let your gods therefore, O philoſophers! be ſuited to the preſent appearances of nature: And preſume not to alter theſe appearances by arbitrary ſuppoſitions, in order to ſuit them to the attributes, which you ſo fondly aſcribe to your deities.

When prieſts and poets, ſupported by your authority, O Athenians! talk of a golden or ſilver age, which preceded the preſent ſtate of vice and miſery, I hear them with attention and with reverence. But when philoſophers,

philoſophers, who pretend to neglect authority, and to cultivate reaſon, hold the ſame diſcourſe, I pay them not, I own, the ſame obſequious ſubmiſſion and pious deference. I aſk, who carried them into the celeſtial regions; who admitted them into the council of the gods; who opened to them the book of fate, that they thus raſhly affirm, that their deities have executed, or will execute, any purpoſe beyond what has actually appeared? If they tell me, that they have mounted on the ſteps or by the gradual aſcent of reaſon, and by drawing inferences from effects to cauſes, I ſtill inſiſt, that they have aided the aſcent of reaſon by the wings of imagination; otherwiſe they could not thus change their manner of inference, and argue from cauſes to effects; preſuming, that a more perfect production than the preſent world, would be more ſuitable to ſuch perfect beings as the gods, and forgetting that they have have no reaſon to aſcribe to theſe celeſtial beings any perfection, or any attribute, but what can be found in the preſent world.

Hence all the fruitleſs induſtry to account for the ill appearances of nature, and ſave the honour of the gods; while we muſt acknowledge the reality of that evil and diſorder with which the world ſo much abounds. The obſtinate and intractable qualities of matter, we are told, or the obſervance of general laws, or ſome ſuch reaſon, is the ſole cauſe, which controlled the power and benevolence of Jupiter, and obliged him to create mankind and every ſenſible creature ſo imperfect and ſo unhappy. Theſe attributes, then, are, it ſeems, beforehand, taken for granted, in their greateſt latitude. And upon that ſuppoſition, I own, that ſuch conjectures may, perhaps, be admitted as plauſible ſolutions of the ill phænomena. But ſtill I aſk,

I aſk, Why take theſe attributes for granted; or why aſcribe to the cauſe any qualities but what actually appear in the effect? Why torture your brain, to juſtify the courſe of nature upon ſuppoſitions, which, for aught you know, may be entirely imaginary, and of which there are to be found no traces in the courſe of nature?

The religious hypotheſis, therefore, muſt be conſidered only as a particular method of accounting for the viſible phænomena of the univerſe: But no juſt reaſoner will ever preſume to infer from it any ſingle fact, and alter or add to the phænomena in any ſingle particular. If you think, that the appearances of things prove ſuch cauſes, it is allowable for you to draw an inference concerning the exiſtence of theſe cauſes. In ſuch complicated and ſublime ſubjects, every one ſhould be indulged in the liberty of conjecture and argument. But here you ought to reſt. If you come backward, and, arguing from your inferred cauſes, conclude, that any other fact has exiſted, or will exiſt, in the courſe of nature, which may ſerve as a fuller diſplay of particular attributes; I muſt admoniſh you, that you have departed from the method of reaſoning attached to the preſent ſubject, and have certainly added ſomething to the attributes of the cauſe beyond what appears in the effect; otherwiſe you could never, with tolerable ſenſe or propriety, add any thing to the effect, in order to render it more worthy of the cauſe.

Where, then, is the odiouſneſs of that doctrine which I teach in my ſchool, or rather, which I examine in my gardens? Or what do you find in this whole queſtion, wherein the ſecurity of good morals, or the peace and order of ſociety, is in the leaſt concerned?

I deny

I deny a providence, you ſay, and ſupreme governor of the world, who guides the courſe of events, and puniſhes the vicious with infamy and diſappointment, and rewards the virtuous with honour and ſucceſs in all their undertakings. But ſurely, I deny not the courſe itſelf of events, which lies open to every one's inquiry and examination. I acknowledge, that, in the preſent order of things, virtue is attended with more peace of mind than vice, and meets with a more favourable reception from the world. I am ſenſible, that, according to the paſt experience of mankind, friendſhip is the chief joy of human life, and moderation the only ſource of tranquillity and happineſs. I never balance between the virtuous and the vicious courſe of life; but am ſenſible, that, to a well-diſpoſed mind, every advantage is on the ſide of the former. And what can you ſay more, allowing all your ſuppoſitions and reaſonings? You tell me, indeed, that this diſpoſition of things proceeds from intelligence and deſign. But whatever it proceeds from, the diſpoſition itſelf, on which depends our happineſs or miſery, and conſequently our conduct and deportment in life, is ſtill the ſame. It is ſtill open for me, as well as you, to regulate my behaviour by my experience of paſt events. And if you affirm, that, while a divine providence is allowed, and a ſupreme diſtributive juſtice in the univerſe, I ought to expect ſome more particular reward of the good, and puniſhment of the bad, beyond the ordinary courſe of events; I here find the ſame fallacy, which I have before endeavoured to detect. You perſiſt in imagining, that, if we grant that divine exiſtence, for which you ſo earneſtly contend, you may ſafely infer conſequences from it, and add ſomething to the experienced order of nature, by arguing from the attributes

attributes which you aſcribe to your gods. You ſeem not to remember that all your reaſonings on this ſubject can only be drawn from effects to cauſes; and that every argument deduced from cauſes to effects, muſt of neceſſity be a groſs ſophiſm; ſince it is impoſſible for you to know any thing of the cauſe, but what you have antecedently, not inferred, but diſcovered to the full, in the effect.

But what muſt a philoſopher think of thoſe vain reaſoners, who, inſtead of regarding the preſent ſcene of things as the ſole object of their contemplation, ſo far reverſe the whole courſe of nature, as to render this life merely a paſſage to ſomething farther; a porch, which leads to a greater, and vaſtly different building; a prologue, which ſerves only to introduce the piece, and give it more grace and propriety? Whence, do you think, can ſuch philoſophers derive their idea of the gods? From their own conceit and imagination, ſurely. For if they derive it from the preſent phænomena, it would never point to any thing farther, but muſt be exactly adjuſted to them. That the divinity may poſſibly be endowed with attributes, which we have never ſeen exerted; may be governed by principles of action, which we cannot diſcover to be ſatisfied: all this will freely be allowed. But ſtill this is mere poſſibility and hypotheſis. We never can have reaſon to infer any attributes, or any principles of action in him, but ſo far as we know them to have been exerted and ſatisfied.

'Are there any marks of a diſtributive juſtice in the 'world?' If you anſwer in the affirmative, I conclude, that, ſince juſtice here exerts itſelf, it is ſatisfied. If you reply in the negative, I conclude, that you have then no reaſon to aſcribe juſtice, in our ſenſe of it, to the

the gods. If you hold a medium between affirmation and negation, by ſaying, that the juſtice of the gods, at preſent, exerts itſelf in part, but not in its full extent: I anſwer, that you have no reaſon to give it any particular extent, but only ſo far as you ſee it at preſent exert itſelf.

Thus I bring the diſpute, O Athenians! to a ſhort iſſue with my antagoniſts. The courſe of nature lies open to my contemplation, as well as to theirs. The experienced train of events is the great ſtandard, by which we all regulate our conduct. Nothing elſe can be appealed to in the field, or in the ſenate. Nothing elſe ought ever to be heard of in the ſchool, or in the cloſet. In vain would our limited underſtanding break through thoſe boundaries, which are too narrow for our fond imagination. While we argue from the courſe of nature, and infer a particular intelligent cauſe, which firſt beſtowed, and ſtill preſerves order in the univerſe, we embrace a principle, which is both uncertain and uſeleſs. It is uncertain; becauſe the ſubject lies entirely beyond the reach of human experience. It is uſeleſs; becauſe our knowledge of this cauſe, being derived entirely from the courſe of nature, we can never, according to the rules of juſt reaſoning, return back from the cauſe with any new inference; or, making additions to the common and experienced courſe of nature, eſtabliſh any new principles of conduct and behaviour.

I obſerve (ſaid I, finding he had finiſhed his harangue) that you neglect not the artifice of the demagogues of old; and as you were pleaſed to make me ſtand for the people, you inſinuate yourſelf into my favour, by embracing thoſe principles, to which, you know, I have always expreſſed a particular attachment. But, allowing you to make experience (as indeed I think

think you ought) the only ſtandard of our judgment concerning this, and all other queſtions of fact; I doubt not but, from the very ſame experience to which you appeal, it may be poſſible to refute this reaſoning, which you have put into the mouth of Epicurus. If you ſaw, for inſtance, a half-finiſhed building, ſurrounded with heaps of brick and ſtone and mortar, and all the inſtruments of maſonry; could you not infer from the effect, that it was a work of deſign and contrivance? and could you not return again, from this inferred cauſe, to infer new additions to the effect, and conclude, that the building would ſoon be finiſhed, and and receive all the further improvements which art could beſtow upon it? If you ſaw upon the ſea-ſhore the print of one human foot, you would conclude, that a man had paſſed that way, and that he had alſo left the traces of the other foot, though effaced by the rolling of the ſands or inundation of the waters. Why then do you refuſe to admit the ſame method of reaſoning with regard to the order of nature? Conſider the world and the preſent life only as an imperfect building, from which you can infer a ſuperior intelligence; and, arguing from that ſuperior intelligence, which can leave nothing imperfect: why may you not infer a more finiſhed ſcheme or plan, which will receive its completion in ſome diſtant point of ſpace or time? Are not theſe methods of reaſoning exactly ſimilar? And under what pretence can you embrace the one, while you reject the other?

The infinite difference of the ſubjects, replied he, is a ſufficient foundation for this difference in my concluſions. In works of human art and contrivance, it is allowable to advance from the effect to the cauſe, and, returning back from the cauſe, to form new inferences concerning

concerning the effect, and examine the alterations which it has probably undergone, or may ſtill undergo. But what is the foundation of this method of reaſoning? Plainly this; that man is a being, whom we know by experience, whoſe motives and deſigns we are acquainted with, and whoſe projects and inclinations have a certain connection and coherence, according to the laws which nature has eſtabliſhed for the government of ſuch a creature. When, therefore, we find, that any work has proceeded from the ſkill and induſtry of man; as we are otherwiſe acquainted with the nature of the animal, we can draw a hundred inferences concerning what may be expected from him; and theſe inferences will all be founded in experience and obſervation. But did we know man only from the ſingle work or production which we examine, it were impoſſible for us to argue in this manner; becauſe our knowledge of all the qualities, which we aſcribe to him, being in that caſe derived from the production, it is impoſſible they could point to any thing farther, or be the foundation of any new inference. The print of a foot in the ſand can only prove, when conſidered alone, that there was ſome figure adapted to it, by which it was produced: But the print of a human foot proves likewiſe, from our other experience, that there was probably another foot, which alſo left its impreſſion, though effaced by time or other accidents. Here we mount from the effect to the cauſe; and deſcending again from the cauſe, infer alterations in the effect: but this is not a continuation of the ſame ſimple chain of reaſoning. We comprehend in this caſe a hundred other experiences and obſervations concerning the uſual figure and members of that ſpecies of animal, without which this method of

argument muſt be conſidered as fallacious and ſophiſtical.

The caſe is not the ſame with our reaſonings from the works of nature. The Deity is known to us only by his productions, and is a ſingle being in the univerſe, not comprehended under any ſpecies or genus, from whoſe experienced attributes or qualities, we can, by analogy, infer any attribute or quality in him. As the univerſe ſhows wiſdom and goodneſs, we infer wiſdom and goodneſs. As it ſhows a particular degree of theſe perfections, we infer a particular degree of them, preciſely adapted to the effect which we examine. But farther attributes, or farther degrees of the ſame attributes, we can never be authoriſed to infer or ſuppoſe, by any rules of juſt reaſoning. Now, without ſome ſuch licence of ſuppoſition, it is impoſſible for us to argue from the cauſe, or infer any alteration in the effect, beyond what has immediately fallen under our obſervation. Greater good produced by this Being, muſt ſtill prove a greater degree of goodneſs: A more impartial diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments muſt proceed from a greater regard to juſtice and equity. Every ſuppoſed addition to the works of nature, makes an addition to the attributes of the Author of nature; and conſequently, being entirely unſupported by any reaſon or argument, can never be admitted but as mere conjecture and hypotheſis *.

The great ſource of our miſtake in this ſubject, and of the unbounded licence of conjecture which we indulge, is, that we tacitly conſider ourſelves as in the place of the Supreme Being, and conclude, that he will, on every occaſion, obſerve the ſame conduct, which we ourſelves,

* See Note [M].

ourſelves, in his ſituation, would have embraced as reaſonable and eligible. But, beſides that the ordinary courſe of nature may convince us, that almoſt every thing is regulated by principles and maxims very different from ours; beſides this, I ſay, it muſt evidently appear contrary to all rules of analogy, to reaſon from the intentions and projects of man, to thoſe of a Being, ſo different, and ſo much ſuperior. In human nature, there is a certain experienced coherence of deſigns and inclinations; ſo that when, from any fact, we have diſcovered one intention of any man, it may often be reaſonable, from experience, to infer another, and draw a long chain of concluſions concerning his paſt or future conduct. But this method of reaſoning can never have place with regard to a Being ſo remote and incomprehenſible, who bears much leſs analogy to any other being in the univerſe than the ſun to a waxen taper, and who diſcovers himſelf only by ſome faint traces or outlines, beyond which we have no authority to aſcribe to him any attribute or perfection. What we imagine to be a ſuperior perfection, may really be a defect: Or were it ever ſo much a perfection, the aſcribing of it to the Supreme Being, where it appears not to have been really exerted to the full in his works, favours more of flattery and panegyric than of juſt reaſoning and ſound philoſophy. All the philoſophy, therefore, in the world, and all the religion, which is nothing but a ſpecies of philoſophy, will never be able to carry us beyond the uſual courſe of experience, or give us meaſures of conduct and behaviour different from thoſe which are furniſhed by reflections on common life. No new fact can ever be inferred from the religious hypotheſis; no event foreſeen or foretold; no reward or puniſhment expected or dreaded, beyond

what is already known by practice and obſervation; ſo that my apology for Epicurus will ſtill appear ſolid and ſatisfactory: nor have the political intereſts of ſociety any connection with the philoſophical diſputes concerning metaphyſics and religion.

There is ſtill one circumſtance, replied I, which you ſeem to have overlooked. Though I ſhould allow your premiſes, I muſt deny your concluſion. You conclude, that religious doctrines and reaſonings can have no influence on life, becauſe they ought to have no influence; never conſidering, that men reaſon not in the ſame manner you do, but draw many conſequences from the belief of a divine Exiſtence, and ſuppoſe that the Deity will inflict puniſhments on vice, and beſtow rewards on virtue, beyond what appear in the ordinary courſe of nature. Whether this reaſoning of theirs be juſt or not, is no matter. Its influence on their life and conduct muſt ſtill be the ſame: And thoſe who attempt to diſabuſe them of ſuch prejudices, may, for aught I know, be good reaſoners, but I cannot allow them to be good citizens and politicians; ſince they free men from one reſtraint upon their paſſions, and make the infringement of the laws of ſociety, in one reſpect, more eaſy and ſecure.

After all, I may, perhaps, agree to your general concluſion in favour of liberty, though upon different premiſes from thoſe on which you endeavour to found it. I think, that the ſtate ought to tolerate every principle of philoſophy; nor is there an inſtance, that any government has ſuffered in its political intereſts by ſuch indulgence. There is no enthuſiaſm among philoſophers; their doctrines are not very alluring to the people; and no reſtraint can be put upon their reaſonings, but what muſt be of dangerous conſequence

to

to the ſciences, and even to the ſtate, by paving the way for perſecution and oppreſſion in points where the generality of mankind are more deeply intereſted and concerned.

But there occurs to me (continued I), with regard to your main topic, a difficulty which I ſhall juſt propoſe to you, without inſiſting on it, leſt it lead into reaſonings of too nice and delicate a nature. In a word, I much doubt whether it be poſſible for a cauſe to be known only by its effect (as you have all along ſuppoſed), or to be of ſo ſingular and particular a nature, as to have no parallel and no ſimilarity with any other cauſe or object that has ever fallen under our obſervation. It is only when two ſpecies of objects are found to be conſtantly conjoined, that we can infer the one from the other; and were an effect preſented which was entirely ſingular, and could not be comprehended under any known ſpecies, I do not ſee, that we could form any conjecture or inference at all concerning its cauſe. If experience and obſervation and analogy be, indeed, the only guides which we can reaſonably follow in inferences of this nature; both the effect and cauſe muſt bear a ſimilarity and reſemblance to other effects and cauſes which we know, and which we have found, in many inſtances, to be conjoined with each other. I leave it to your own reflection to purſue the conſequences of this principle. I ſhall juſt obſerve, that as the antagoniſts of Epicurus always ſuppoſe the univerſe, an effect quite ſingular and unparalleled, to be the proof of a Deity, a cauſe no leſs ſingular and unparalleled; your reaſonings, upon that ſuppoſition, ſeem, at leaſt, to merit our attention. There is, I own, ſome difficulty how we can ever return from the cauſe to the effect, and, reaſoning

from our ideas of the former, infer any alteration on the latter, or any addition to it.

SECTION XII.

Of the Academical or Sceptical Philoſophy.

PART I.

THERE is not a greater number of philoſophical reaſonings diſplayed upon any ſubject than thoſe which prove the exiſtence of a Deity, and refute the fallacies of Atheiſts; and yet the moſt religious philoſophers ſtill diſpute, whether any man can be ſo blinded as to be a ſpeculative atheiſt. How ſhall we reconcile theſe contradictions? The knights-errant, who wandered about to clear the world of dragons and giants, never entertained the leaſt doubt with regard to the exiſtence of theſe monſters.

The Sceptic is another enemy of religion, who naturally provokes the indignation of all divines and graver philoſophers; though it is certain, that no man ever met with any ſuch abſurd creature, or converſed with a man who had no opinion or principle concerning any ſubject, either of action or ſpeculation. This begets a very natural queſtion, What is meant by a ſceptic? And how far it is poſſible to puſh theſe philoſophical principles of doubt and uncertainty?

There is a ſpecies of ſcepticiſm, antecedent to all ſtudy and philoſophy, which is much inculcated by Des

Des Cartes, and others, as a ſovereign preſervative againſt error and precipitate judgment. It recommends an univerſal doubt, not only of all our former opinions and principles, but alſo of our very faculties; of whoſe veracity, ſay they, we muſt aſſure ourſelves, by a chain of reaſoning, deduced from ſome original principle, which cannot poſſibly be fallacious or deceitful. But neither is there any ſuch original principle, which has a prerogative above others, that are ſelf-evident and convincing: Or if there were, could we advance a ſtep beyond it, but by the uſe of thoſe very faculties of which we are ſuppoſed to be already diffident? The Carteſian doubt, therefore, were it ever poſſible to be attained by any human creature (as it plainly is not) would be entirely incurable; and no reaſoning could ever bring us to a ſtate of aſſurance and conviction upon any ſubject.

It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that this ſpecies of ſcepticiſm, when more moderate, may be underſtood in a very reaſonable ſenſe, and is a neceſſary preparative to the ſtudy of philoſophy, by preſerving a proper impartiality in our judgments, and weaning our mind from all thoſe prejudices which we may have imbibed from education or raſh opinion. To begin with clear and ſelf-evident principles, to advance by timorous and ſure ſteps, to review frequently our concluſions, and examine accurately all their conſequences; though by theſe means we ſhall make both a ſlow and a ſhort progreſs in our ſyſtems; are the only methods by which we can ever hope to reach truth, and attain a proper ſtability and certainty in our determinations.

There is another ſpecies of ſcepticiſm, conſequent to ſcience and enquiry, when men are ſuppoſed to have diſcovered, either the abſolute fallaciouſneſs of their

mental faculties, or their unfitneſs to reach any fixed determination in all thoſe curious ſubjects of ſpeculation about which they are commonly employed. Even our very ſenſes are brought into diſpute by a certain ſpecies of philoſophers; and the maxims of common life are ſubjected to the ſame doubt as the moſt profound principles or concluſions of metaphyſics and theology. As theſe paradoxical tenets (if they may be called tenets) are to be met with in ſome philoſophers, and the refutation of them in ſeveral, they naturally excite our curioſity, and make us inquire into the arguments on which they may be founded.

I need not inſiſt upon the more trite topics, employed by the ſceptics in all ages, againſt the evidence of ſenſe; ſuch as thoſe which are derived from the imperfection and fallaciouſneſs of our organs, on numberleſs occaſions; the crooked appearance of an oar in water; the various aſpects of objects, according to their different diſtances; the double images which ariſe from the preſſing one eye; with many other appearances of a like nature. Theſe ſceptical topics, indeed, are only ſufficient to prove, that the ſenſes alone are not implicitly to be depended on; but that we muſt correct their evidence by reaſon, and by conſiderations, derived from the nature of the medium, the diſtance of the object, and the diſpoſition of the organ, in order to render them, within their ſphere, the proper *criteria* of truth and falſehood. There are other more profound arguments againſt the ſenſes, which admit not of ſo eaſy a ſolution.

It ſeems evident, that men are carried, by a natural inſtinct or prepoſſeſſion, to repoſe faith in their ſenſes; and that, without any reaſoning, or even almoſt before the uſe of reaſon, we always ſuppoſe an external univerſe,

verſe, which depends not on our perception, but would exiſt though we and every ſenſible creature were abſent or annihilated. Even the animal creation are governed by a like opinion, and preſerve this belief of external objects, in all their thoughts, deſigns, and actions.

It ſeems alſo evident, that, when men follow this blind and powerful inſtinct of nature, they always ſuppoſe the very images, preſented by the ſenſes, to be the external objects, and never entertain any ſuſpicion, that the one are nothing but repreſentations of the other. This very table, which we ſee white, and which we feel hard, is believed to exiſt, independent of our perception, and to be ſomething external to our mind, which perceives it. Our preſence beſtows not being on it: Our abſence does not annihilate it. It preſerves its exiſtence uniform and entire, independent of the ſituation of intelligent beings, who perceive or contemplate it.

But this univerſal and primary opinion of all men is ſoon deſtroyed by the ſlighteſt philoſophy, which teaches us, that nothing can ever be preſent to the mind but an image or perception, and that the ſenſes are only the inlets, through which theſe images are conveyed, without being able to produce any immediate intercourſe between the mind and the object. The table, which we ſee, ſeems to diminiſh, as we remove farther from it: But the real table, which exiſts independent of us, ſuffers no alteration: It was, therefore, nothing but its image, which was preſent to the mind. Theſe are the obvious dictates of reaſon; and no man, who reflects, ever doubted, that the exiſtences, which we conſider, when we ſay, 'this houſe,' and 'that tree,' are nothing but perceptions in the mind, and fleeting copies

copies or repreſentations of other exiſtences, which remain uniform and independent.

So far, then, are we neceſſitated by reaſoning to contradict or depart from the primary inſtincts of nature, and to embrace a new ſyſtem with regard to the evidence of our ſenſes. But here philoſophy finds herſelf extremely embarraſſed, when ſhe would juſtify this new ſyſtem, and obviate the cavils and objections of the ſceptics. She can no longer plead the infallible and irreſiſtible inſtinct of nature: For that led us to a quite different ſyſtem, which is acknowledged fallible and even erroneous. And to juſtify this pretended philoſophical ſyſtem, by a chain of clear and convincing argument, or even any appearance of argument, exceeds the power of all human capacity.

By what argument can it be proved, that the perceptions of the mind muſt be cauſed by external objects, entirely different from them, though reſembling them (if that be poſſible), and could not ariſe either from the energy of the mind itſelf, or from the ſuggeſtion of ſome inviſible and unknown ſpirit, or from ſome other cauſe ſtill more unknown to us? It is acknowledged, that, in fact, many of theſe perceptions ariſe not from any thing external, as in dreams, madneſs, and other diſeaſes. And nothing can be more inexplicable than the manner, in which body ſhould ſo operate upon mind, as ever to convey an image of itſelf to a ſubſtance, ſuppoſed of ſo different, and even contrary a nature.

It is a queſtion of fact, whether the perceptions of the ſenſes be produced by external objects, reſembling them. How ſhall this queſtion be determined? By experience ſurely; as all other queſtions of a like nature. But here experience is, and muſt be entirely ſilent.

The

The mind has never any thing preſent to it but the perceptions, and cannot poſſibly reach any experience of their connection with objects. The ſuppoſition of ſuch a connection is, therefore, without any foundation in reaſoning.

To have recourſe to the veracity of the Supreme Being in order to prove the veracity of our ſenſes, is ſurely making a very unexpected circuit. If his veracity were at all concerned in this matter, our ſenſes would be entirely infallible, becauſe it is not poſſible that he can ever deceive. Not to mention, that, if the external world be once called in queſtion, we ſhall be at a loſs to find arguments, by which we may prove the exiſtence of that Being, or any of his attributes.

This is a topic, therefore, in which the profounder and more philoſophical ſceptics will always triumph, when they endeavour to introduce an univerſal doubt into all ſubjects of human knowledge and inquiry. Do you follow the inſtincts and propenſities of nature, may they ſay, in aſſenting to the veracity of ſenſe? But theſe lead you to believe, that the very perception or ſenſible image is the external object. Do you diſclaim this principle, in order to embrace a more rational opinion, that the perceptions are only repreſentations of ſomething external? You here depart from your natural propenſities and more obvious ſentiments; and yet are not able to ſatisfy your reaſon, which can never find any convincing argument from experience to prove, that the perceptions are connected with any external objects.

There is another ſceptical topic of a like nature, derived from the moſt profound philoſophy; which might merit our attention, were it requiſite to dive ſo deep, in order to diſcover arguments and reaſonings, which can

can ſo little ſerve to any ſerious purpoſe. It is univerſally allowed by modern inquirers, that all the ſenſible qualities of objects, ſuch as hard, ſoft, hot, cold, white, black, &c. are merely ſecondary, and exiſt not in the objects themſelves, but are perceptions of the mind, without any external archetype or model, which they repreſent. If this be allowed with regard to ſecondary qualities, it muſt alſo follow, with regard to the ſuppoſed primary qualities of extenſion and ſolidity; nor can the latter be any more entitled to that denomination than the former. The idea of extenſion is entirely acquired from the ſenſes of ſight and feeling; and if all the qualities, perceived by the ſenſes, be in the mind, not in the object, the ſame concluſion muſt reach the idea of extenſion, which is wholly dependent on the ſenſible ideas, or the ideas of ſecondary qualities. Nothing can ſave us from this concluſion, but the aſſerting, that the ideas of thoſe primary qualities are attained by Abſtraction; an opinion which, if we examine it accurately, we ſhall find to be unintelligible, and even abſurd. An extenſion that is neither tangible nor viſible, cannot poſſibly be conceived: And a tangible or viſible extenſion, which is neither hard nor ſoft, black nor white, is equally beyond the reach of human conception. Let any man try to conceive a triangle in general, which is neither Iſoceles nor Scalenum, nor has any particular length or proportion of ſides; and he will ſoon perceive the abſurdity of all the ſcholaſtic notions with regard to abſtraction and general ideas*.

Thus the firſt philoſophical objection to the evidence of ſenſe, or to the opinion of external exiſtence, conſiſts in this, that ſuch an opinion, if reſted on natural inſtinct,

* See NOTE [N].

inſtinct, is contrary to reaſon; and if referred to reaſon, is contrary to natural inſtinct, and at the ſame time carries no rational evidence with it, to convince an impartial inquirer. The ſecond objection goes farther, and repreſents this opinion as contrary to reaſon: at leaſt, if it be a principle of reaſon, that all ſenſible qualities are in the mind, not in the object. Bereave matter of all its intelligible qualities, both primary and ſecondary, you in a manner annihilate it, and and leave only a certain unknown, inexplicable ſomething, as the cauſe of our perceptions; a notion ſo imperfect, that no ſceptic will think it worth while to contend againſt it.

PART II.

It may ſeem a very extravagant attempt of the ſceptics, to deſtroy Reaſon by argument and ratiocination; yet is this the grand ſcope of all their inquiries and diſputes. They endeavour to find objections, both to our abſtract reaſonings, and to thoſe which regard matter of fact and exiſtence.

The chief objection againſt all abſtract reaſonings is derived from the ideas of ſpace and time; ideas which, in common life, and to a careleſs view, are very clear and intelligible; but when they paſs through the ſcrutiny of the profound ſciences (and they are the chief object of theſe ſciences), afford principles, which ſeem full of abſurdity and contradiction. No prieſtly dogmas, invented on purpoſe to tame and ſubdue the rebellious reaſon of mankind, ever ſhocked common ſenſe more than the doctrine of the infinite diviſibility of extenſion, with its conſequences; as they are pompouſly diſplayed by all geometricians and metaphyſicians,

ficians; with a kind of triumph and exultation. A real quantity, infinitely leſs than any finite quantity, containing quantities infinitely leſs than itſelf, and ſo on *in infinitum*; this is an edifice ſo bold and prodigious, that it is too weighty for any pretended demonſtration to ſupport, becauſe it ſhocks the cleareſt and moſt natural principles of human reaſon *. But what renders the matter more extraordinary, is, that theſe ſeemingly abſurd opinions are ſupported by a chain of reaſoning, the cleareſt and moſt natural; nor is it poſſible for us to allow the premiſes, without admitting the conſequences. Nothing can be more convincing and ſatisfactory than all the concluſions concerning the properties of circles and triangles; and yet, when theſe are once received, how can we deny, that the angle of contact between a circle and its tangent, is infinitely leſs than any rectilineal angle, that as you may increaſe the diameter of the circle *in infinitum*, this angle of contact becomes ſtill leſs, even *in infinitum*, and that the angle of contact between other curves and their tangents may be infinitely leſs than thoſe between any circle and its tangent, and ſo on *in infinitum*? The demonſtration of theſe principles ſeems as unexceptionable as that which proves the three angles of a triangle to be equal to two right ones, though the latter opinion be natural and eaſy, and the former big with contradiction and abſurdity. Reaſon here ſeems to be thrown into a kind of amazement and ſuſpenſe, which, without the ſuggeſtions of any ſceptic, gives her a diffidence of herſelf, and of the ground on which ſhe treads. She ſees a full light, which illuminates certain places; but that light borders upon the moſt profound darkneſs. And, between theſe,

* See NOTE [O].

theſe, ſhe is ſo dazzled and confounded, that ſhe ſcarcely can pronounce with certainty and aſſurance concerning any one object.

The abſurdity of theſe bold determinations of the abſtract ſciences ſeems to become, if poſſible, ſtill more palpable with regard to time than extenſion. An infinite number of real parts of time, paſſing in ſucceſſion, and exhauſted one after another, appears ſo evident a contradiction, that no man, one ſhould think, whoſe judgment is not corrupted, inſtead of being improved, by the ſciences, would ever be able to admit of it.

Yet ſtill reaſon muſt remain reſtleſs and unquiet, even with regard to that ſcepticiſm, to which ſhe is driven by theſe ſeeming abſurdities and contradictions. How any clear, diſtinct idea can contain circumſtances contradictory to itſelf, or to any other clear, diſtinct idea, is abſolutely incomprehenſible; and is, perhaps, as abſurd as any propoſition which can be formed. So that nothing can be more ſceptical, or more full of doubt and heſitation, than this ſcepticiſm itſelf, which ariſes from ſome of the paradoxical concluſions of geometry or the ſcience of quantity *.

The ſceptical objections to moral evidence, or to the reaſonings concerning matter of fact, are either popular or philoſophical. The popular objections are derived from the natural weakneſs of human underſtanding; the contradictory opinions, which have been entertained in different ages and nations; the variations of our judgment in ſickneſs and health, youth and old age, proſperity and adverſity; the perpetual contradiction of each particular man's opinions and ſentiments; with many other topics of that kind. It is needleſs to inſiſt

* See NOTE [P].

inſiſt farther on this head. Theſe objections are but weak. For as, in common life, we reaſon every moment concerning fact and exiſtence, and cannot poſſibly ſubſiſt, without continually employing this ſpecies of argument, any popular objections, derived from thence, muſt be inſufficient to deſtroy that evidence. The great ſubverter of Pyrrhoniſm, or the exceſſive principles of ſcepticiſm, is action, and employment, and the occupations of common life. Theſe principles may flouriſh and triumph in the ſchools; where it is, indeed, difficult, if not impoſſible, to refute them: But as ſoon as they leave the ſhade, and, by the preſence of the real objects which actuate our paſſions and ſentiments, are put in oppoſition to the more powerful principles of our nature, they vaniſh like ſmoke, and leave the moſt determined ſceptic in the ſame condition as other mortals.

The ſceptic, therefore, had better keep within his proper ſphere, and diſplay thoſe philoſophical objections which ariſe from more profound reſearches. Here he ſeems to have ample matter of triumph; while he juſtly inſiſts, that all our evidence for any matter of fact, which lies beyond the teſtimony of ſenſe or memory, is derived entirely from the relation of cauſe and effect; that we have no other idea of this relation than that of two objects which have been frequently conjoined together; that we have no argument to convince us, that objects which have, in our experience, been frequently conjoined, will likewiſe, in other inſtances, be conjoined in the ſame manner; and that nothing leads us to this inference but cuſtom, or a certain inſtinct of our nature; which, it is indeed difficult to reſiſt, but which, like other inſtincts, may be fallacious and deceitful. While the ſceptic inſiſts upon

upon theſe topics, he ſhows his force, or rather, indeed, his own and our weakneſs, and ſeems, for the time at leaſt, to deſtroy all aſſurance and conviction. Theſe arguments might be diſplayed at greater length, if any durable good or benefit to ſociety could ever be expected to reſult from them.

For here is the chief and moſt confounding objection to exceſſive ſcepticiſm, that no durable good can ever reſult from it, while it remains in its full force and vigour. We need only aſk ſuch a ſceptic, "What his meaning is? And what he propoſes by all theſe curious reſearches?" He is immediately at a loſs, and knows not what to anſwer. A Copernican or Ptolemaic, who ſupports each his different ſyſtem of aſtronomy, may hope to produce a conviction which will remain conſtant and durable with his audience. A Stoic or Epicurean diſplays principles which may not only be durable, but which have an effect on conduct and behaviour. But a Pyrrhonian cannot expect that his philoſophy will have any conſtant influence on the mind: Or if it had, that its influence would be beneficial to ſociety. On the contrary, he muſt acknowledge, if he will acknowledge any thing, that all human life muſt periſh, were his principles univerſally and ſteadily to prevail. All diſcourſe, all action, would immediately ceaſe, and men remain in a total lethargy, till the neceſſities of nature, unſatisfied, put an end to their miſerable exiſtence. It is true, ſo fatal an event is very little to be dreaded. Nature is always too ſtrong for principle: And though a Pyrrhonian may throw himſelf or others into a momentary amazement and confuſion by his profound reaſonings; the firſt and moſt trivial event in life will put to flight all his doubts and ſcruples, and leave him the ſame, in every

point of action and ſpeculation, with the philoſophers of every other ſect, or with thoſe who never concerned themſelves in any philoſophical reſearches. When he awakes from his dream, he will be the firſt to join in the laugh againſt himſelf, and to confeſs, that all his objections are mere amuſement, and can have no other tendency than to ſhow the whimſical condition of mankind, who muſt act and reaſon and believe; though they are not able, by their moſt diligent inquiry, to ſatisfy themſelves concerning the foundation of theſe operations, or to remove the objections which may be raiſed againſt them.

PART III.

THERE is, indeed, a more mitigated ſcepticiſm or academical philoſophy, which may be both durable and uſeful, and which may, in part, be the reſult of this Pyrrhoniſm, or exceſſive ſcepticiſm, when its undiſtinguiſhed doubts are, in ſome meaſure, corrected by common ſenſe and reflection. The greater part of mankind are naturally apt to be affirmative and dogmatical in their opinions; and while they ſee objects only on one ſide, and have no idea of any counterpoiſing argument, they throw themſelves precipitately into the principles to which they are inclined: nor have they any indulgence for thoſe who entertain oppoſite ſentiments. To heſitate or balance perplexes their underſtanding, checks their paſſion, and ſuſpends their action. They are, therefore, impatient till they eſcape from a ſtate which to them is ſo uneaſy; and they think, that they can never remove themſelves far enough from it, by the violence of their affirmations and obſtinacy of their belief. But could ſuch dogmatical

tical reaſoners become ſenſible of the ſtrange infirmities of human underſtanding, even in its moſt perfect ſtate, and when moſt accurate and cautious in its determinations; ſuch a reflection would naturally inſpire them with more modeſty and reſerve, and diminiſh their fond opinion of themſelves, and their prejudice againſt antagoniſts. The illiterate may reflect on the diſpoſition of the learned, who, amidſt all the advantages of ſtudy and reflection, are commonly ſtill diffident in their determinations: And if any of the learned be inclined, from their natural temper, to haughtineſs and obſtinacy, a ſmall tincture of Pyrrhoniſm might abate their pride, by ſhewing them, that the few advantages which they may have attained over their fellows are but inconſiderable, if compared with the univerſal perplexity and confuſion which is inherent in human nature. In general, there is a degree of doubt and caution and modeſty, which, in all kinds of ſcrutiny and deciſion, ought for ever to accompany a juſt reaſoner.

Another ſpecies of mitigated ſcepticiſm which may be of advantage to mankind, and which may be the natural reſult of the Pyrrhonian doubts and ſcruples, is the limitation of our inquiries to ſuch ſubjects as are beſt adapted to the narrow capacity of human underſtanding. The imagination of man is naturally ſublime, delighted with whatever is remote and extraordinary, and running, without control, into the moſt diſtant parts of ſpace and time, in order to avoid the objects which cuſtom has rendered too familiar to it. A correct judgment obſerves a contrary method, and, avoiding all diſtant and high inquiries, confines itſelf to common life, and to ſuch ſubjects as fall under daily practice and experience; leaving the more ſublime topics to the embelliſhment of poets and orators, or to

the arts of prieſts and politicians. To bring us to ſo ſalutary a determination, nothing can be more ſerviceable than to be once thoroughly convinced of the force of the Pyrrhonian doubt, and of the impoſſibility, that any thing but the ſtrong power of natural inſtinct could free us from it. Thoſe who have a propenſity to philoſophy, will ſtill continue their reſearches; becauſe they reflect, that, beſides the immediate pleaſure attending ſuch an occupation, philoſophical deciſions are nothing but the reflections of common life methodized and corrected. But they will never be tempted to go beyond common life, ſo long as they conſider the imperfection of thoſe faculties which they employ, their narrow reach, and their inaccurate operations. While we cannot give a ſatisfactory reaſon, why we believe, after a thouſand experiments, that a ſtone will fall, or fire burn; can we ever ſatisfy ourſelves concerning any determination which we may form, with regard to the origin of worlds, and the ſituation of nature, from, and to eternity?

This narrow limitation, indeed, of our inquiries, is, in every reſpect, ſo reaſonable, that it ſuffices to make the ſlighteſt examination into the natural powers of the human mind, and to compare them with their objects, in order to recommend it to us. We ſhall then find what are the proper ſubjects of ſcience and inquiry.

It ſeems to me, that the only objects of the abſtract ſciences or of demonſtration are quantity and number, and that all attempts to extend this more perfect ſpecies of knowledge beyond theſe bounds are mere ſophiſtry and illuſion. As the component parts of quantity and number are entirely ſimilar, their relations become intricate and involved; and nothing can be more curious as well as uſeful, than to trace, by a variety

variety of mediums, their equality or inequality through their different appearances. But as all other ideas are clearly diſtinct and different from each other, we can never advance farther, by our utmoſt ſcrutiny, than to obſerve this diverſity, and, by an obvious reflection, pronounce one thing not to be another. Or if there be any difficulty in theſe deciſions, it proceeds entirely from the undeterminate meaning of words, which is corrected by juſter definitions. That the ſquare of the hypothenuſe is equal to the ſquares of the other two ſides, cannot be known, let the terms be ever ſo exactly defined, without a train of reaſoning and inquiry. But to convince us of this propoſition, that where there is no property, there can be no injuſtice, it is only neceſſary to define the terms, and explain injuſtice to be a violation of property. This propoſition is, indeed, nothing but a more imperfect definition. It is the ſame caſe with all thoſe pretended ſyllogiſtical reaſonings which may be found in every other branch of learning, except the ſciences of quantity and number; and theſe may, ſafely, I think, be pronounced the only proper objects of knowledge and demonſtration.

All other inquiries of men regard only matter of fact and exiſtence; and theſe are evidently incapable of demonſtration. Whatever is, may not be. No negation of a fact can involve a contradiction. The non-exiſtence of any being, without exception, is as clear and diſtinct an idea as its exiſtence. The propoſition which affirms it not to be, however falſe, is no leſs conceivable and intelligible, than that which affirms it to be. The caſe is different with the ſciences, properly ſo called. Every propoſition which is not true, is there confuſed and unintelligible. That the cube root of 64 is equal to the half of 10, is a falſe propoſition,

and can never be diſtinctly conceived. But that Cæſar, or the angel Gabriel, or any being, never exiſted, may be a falſe propoſition, but ſtill is perfectly conceivable, and implies no contradiction.

The exiſtence, therefore, of any being can only be proved by arguments from its cauſe or its effect; and theſe arguments are founded entirely on experience. If we reaſon *à priori*, any thing may appear able to produce any thing. The falling of a pebble may, for aught we know, extinguiſh the ſun; or the wiſh of a man control the planets in their orbits. It is only experience which teaches us the nature and bounds of cauſe and effect, and enables us to infer the exiſtence of one object from that of another *. Such is the foundation of moral reaſoning which forms the greater part of human knowledge, and is the ſource of all human action and behaviour.

Moral reaſonings are either concerning particular or general facts. All deliberations in life regard the former; as alſo all diſquiſitions in hiſtory, chronology, geography, and aſtronomy.

The ſciences which treat of general facts are, politics, natural philoſophy, phyſic, chemiſtry, &c. where the qualities, cauſes, and effects, of a whole ſpecies of objects are inquired into.

Divinity or Theology, as it proves the exiſtence of a Deity, and the immortality of ſouls, is compoſed partly of reaſonings concerning particular, partly concerning general facts. It has a foundation in reaſon, ſo far as it is ſupported by experience: But its beſt and moſt ſolid foundation is faith, and divine revelation.

Morals

* See NOTE [Q].

Morals and criticiſm are not ſo properly objects of the underſtanding as of taſte and ſentiment. Beauty, whether moral or natural, is felt more properly than perceived. Or if we reaſon concerning it, and endeavour to fix its ſtandard, we regard a new fact, to wit, the general taſte of mankind, or ſome ſuch fact, which may be the object of reaſoning and inquiry.

When we run over libraries, perſuaded of theſe principles, what havock muſt we make? If we take in our hand any volume of divinity, or ſchool metaphyſics, for inſtance; let us aſk, Does it contain any abſtract reaſoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reaſoning concerning matter of fact and exiſtence? No. Commit it then to the flames: For it can contain nothing but ſophiſtry and illuſion.

A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

PASSIONS.

SECT. I.

1. SOME objects produce immediately an agreeable ſenſation, by the original ſtructure of our organs, and are thence denominated Good; as others, from their immediate diſagreeable ſenſation, acquire the appellation of Evil. Thus, moderate warmth is agreeable and good; exceſſive heat painful and evil.

Some objects again, by being naturally conformable or contrary to paſſion, excite an agreeable or painful ſenſation; and are thence called Good or Evil. The puniſhment of an adverſary, by gratifying revenge, is good; the ſickneſs of a companion, by affecting friendſhip, is evil.

2. All good or evil, whence-ever it ariſes, produces various paſſions and affections, according to the light in which it is ſurveyed.

When good is certain, or very probable, it produces Joy: When evil is in the ſame ſituation, there ariſes Grief or Sorrow.

When

When either good or evil is uncertain, it gives riſe to Fear or Hope, according to the degree of uncertainty on one ſide or the other.

Deſire ariſes from good conſidered ſimply; and Averſion, from evil. The Will exerts itſelf, when either the preſence of the good, or abſence of the evil, may be attained by any action of the mind or body.

3. None of theſe paſſions ſeem to contain any thing curious or remarkable, except Hope and Fear, which, being derived from the probability of any good or evil, are mixed paſſions, that merit our attention.

Probability ariſes from an oppoſition of contrary chances or cauſes, by which the mind is not allowed to fix on either ſide; but is inceſſantly toſſed from one to another, and is determined, one moment, to conſider an object as exiſtent, and another moment, as the contrary. The imagination, or underſtanding, call it which you pleaſe, fluctuates between the oppoſite views; and though, perhaps, it may be oftener turned to one ſide than the other, it is impoſſible for it, by reaſon of the oppoſition of cauſes or chances, to reſt on either. The *pro* and *con* of the queſtion alternately prevail; and the mind, ſurveying the objects in their oppoſite cauſes, finds ſuch a contrariety as deſtroys all certainty or eſtabliſhed opinion.

Suppoſe, then, that the object, concerning which we are doubtful, produces either deſire or averſion; it is evident, that, according as the mind turns itſelf to one ſide or the other, it muſt feel a momentary impreſſion of joy or ſorrow. An object, whoſe exiſtence we deſire, gives ſatisfaction, when we think of thoſe cauſes which produce it; and for the ſame reaſon, excites grief or uneaſineſs from the oppoſite conſideration. So that, as the underſtanding, in probable queſtions, is divided

divided between the contrary points of view, the heart muſt in the ſame manner be divided between oppoſite emotions.

Now, if we conſider the human mind, we ſhall obſerve, that, with regard to the paſſions, it is not like a wind-inſtrument of muſic, which in running over all the notes, immediately loſes the ſound when the breath ceaſes; but rather reſembles a ſtring-inſtrument, where, after each ſtroke, the vibrations ſtill retain ſome ſound, which gradually and inſenſibly decays. The imagination is extremely quick and agile; but the paſſions, in compariſon, are ſlow and reſtive: For which reaſon, when any object is preſented, which affords a variety of views to the one, and emotions to the other; though the fancy may change its views with great celerity; each ſtroke will not produce a clear and diſtinct note of paſſion, but the one paſſion will always be mixed and confounded with the other. According as the probability inclines to good or evil, the paſſion of grief or joy predominates in the compoſition; and theſe paſſions being intermingled by means of the contrary views of the imagination, produce by the union the paſſions of hope or fear.

4. As this theory ſeems to carry its own evidence along with it, we ſhall be more conciſe in our proofs.

The paſſions of fear and hope may ariſe, when the chances are equal on both ſides, and no ſuperiority can be diſcovered in one above the other. Nay, in this ſituation, the paſſions are rather the ſtrongeſt, as the mind has then the leaſt foundation to reſt upon, and is toſſed with the greateſt uncertainty. Throw in a ſuperior degree of probability to the ſide of grief, you immediately ſee that paſſion diffuſe itſelf over the compoſition, and tincture it into fear. Encreaſe the probability,

lity, and by that means the grief; the fear prevails ſtill more and more, till at laſt it runs inſenſibly, as the joy continually diminiſhes, into pure grief. After you have brought it to this ſituation, diminiſh the grief, by a contrary operation to that which encreaſed it, to wit, by diminiſhing the probability on the melancholy ſide; and you will ſee the paſſion clear every moment, 'till it changes inſenſibly into hope; which again runs, by ſlow degrees, into joy, as you encreaſe that part of the compoſition by the encreaſe of the probability. Are not theſe as plain proofs, that the paſſions of fear and hope are mixtures of grief and joy, as in optics it is a proof, that a coloured ray of the ſun, paſſing through a priſm, is a compoſition of two others, when, as you diminiſh or encreaſe the quantity of either, you find it prevail proportionably, more or leſs, in the compoſition?

5. Probability is of two kinds; either when the object is itſelf uncertain, and to be determined by chance; or when, though the object be already certain, yet it is uncertain to our judgment, which finds a number of proofs or preſumptions on each ſide of the queſtion. Both theſe kinds of probability cauſe fear and hope; which muſt proceed from that property, in which they agree; namely, the uncertainty and fluctuation which they beſtow on the paſſion, by that contrariety of views, which is common to both.

6. It is a probable good or evil, which commonly cauſes hope or fear; becauſe probability, producing an inconſtant and wavering ſurvey of an object, occaſions naturally a like mixture and uncertainty of paſſion. But we may obſerve, that, wherever, from other cauſes, this mixture can be produced, the paſſions of fear and hope will ariſe, even though there be no probability.

An

An evil, conceived as barely poſſible, ſometimes produces fear; eſpecially if the evil be very great. A man cannot think of exceſſive pain and torture without trembling, if he runs the leaſt riſk of ſuffering them. The ſmallneſs of the probability is compenſated by the greatneſs of the evil.

But even impoſſible evils cauſe fear; as when we tremble on the brink of a precipice, though we know ourſelves to be in perfect ſecurity, and have it in our choice, whether we will advance a ſtep farther. The immediate preſence of the evil influences the imagination, and produces a ſpecies of belief; but being oppoſed by the reflection on our ſecurity, that belief is immediately retracted, and cauſes the ſame kind of paſſion, as when, from a contrariety of chances, contrary paſſions are produced.

Evils, which are certain, have ſometimes the ſame effect as the poſſible or impoſſible. A man in a ſtrong priſon, without the leaſt means of eſcape, trembles at the thoughts of the rack to which he is ſentenced. The evil is here fixed in itſelf; but the mind has not courage to fix upon it; and this fluctuation gives riſe to a paſſion of a ſimilar appearance with fear.

7. But it is not only where good or evil is uncertain as to its exiſtence, but alſo as to its kind, that fear or hope ariſes. If any one were told that one of his ſons is ſuddenly killed; the paſſion, occaſioned by this event, would not ſettle into grief, till he got certain information which of his ſons he had loſt. Though each ſide of the queſtion produces here the ſame paſſion, that paſſion cannot ſettle, but receives from the imagination, which is unfixed, a tremulous unſteady motion, reſembling the mixture and contention of grief and joy.

8. Thus

8. Thus all kinds of uncertainty have a ſtrong connection with fear, even though they do not cauſe any oppoſition of paſſions by the oppoſite views which they preſent to us. Should I leave a friend in any malady, I ſhould feel more anxiety upon his account than if he were preſent; though perhaps I am not only incapable of giving him aſſiſtance, but likewiſe of judging concerning the event of his ſickneſs. There are a thouſand little circumſtances of his ſituation and condition which I deſire to know; and the knowledge of them would prevent that fluctuation and uncertainty ſo nearly allied to fear. Horace has remarked this phænomenon.

Ut aſſidens implumibus pullus avis
Serpentûm allapſus timet,
Magis relictis; non, ut adſit, auxilî
Latura plus præſentibus.

A virgin on her bridal night goes to bed full of fears and apprehenſions, though ſhe expects nothing but pleaſure. The confuſion of wiſhes and joys, the newneſs and greatneſs of the unknown event, ſo embarraſs the mind, that it knows not in what image or paſſion to fix itſelf.

9. Concerning the mixture of affections, we may remark, in general, that when contrary paſſions ariſe from objects nowiſe connected together, they take place alternately. Thus when a man is afflicted for the loſs of a law-ſuit, and joyful for the birth of a ſon, the mind, running from the agreeable to the calamitous object; with whatever celerity it may perform this motion, can ſcarcely temper the one affection with the other, and remain between them in a ſtate of indifference.

It

It more eaſily attains that calm ſituation, when the ſame event is of a mixed nature, and contains ſomething adverſe and ſomething proſperous in its different circumſtances. For in that caſe, both the paſſions mingling with each other, by means of the relation, often become mutually deſtructive, and leave the mind in perfect tranquillity.

But ſuppoſe that the object is not a compound of good and evil, but is conſidered as probable or improbable in any degree; in that caſe, the contrary paſſions will both of them be preſent at once in the ſoul, and, inſtead of balancing and tempering each other, will ſubſiſt together, and by their union produce a third impreſſion or affection, ſuch as hope or fear.

The influence of the relations of ideas (which we ſhall explain more fully afterwards), is plainly ſeen in this affair. In contrary paſſions, if the objects be totally different, the paſſions are like two oppoſite liquors in different bottles, which have no influence on each other. If the objects be intimately connected, the paſſions are like an alcali and an acid, which, being mingled, deſtroy each other. If the relation be more imperfect, and conſiſt in the contradictory views of the ſame object, the paſſions are like oil and vinegar, which, however mingled, never perfectly unite and incorporate.

The effect of a mixture of paſſions, when one of them is predominant and ſwallows up the other, ſhall be explained afterwards.

SECT. II.

1. Besides thoſe paſſions above-mentioned, which ariſe from a direct purſuit of good, and averſion to evil,

evil, there are others which are of a more complicated nature, and imply more than one view or conſideration. Thus Pride is a certain ſatisfaction in ourſelves, on account of ſome accompliſhment or poſſeſſion which we enjoy. Humility, on the other hand, is a diſſatisfaction with ourſelves, on account of ſome defect or infirmity.

Love or Friendſhip is a complacency in another, on account of his accompliſhments or ſervices: Hatred, the contrary.

2. In theſe two ſets of paſſions, there is an obvious diſtinction to be made between the object of the paſſion and its cauſe. The object of pride and humility is ſelf: The cauſe of the paſſion is ſome excellence in the former caſe; ſome fault in the latter. The object of love and hatred is ſome other perſon: The cauſes, in like manner, are either excellencies or faults.

With regard to all theſe paſſions, the cauſes are what excite the emotion; the object is what the mind directs its view to when the emotion is excited. Our merit, for inſtance, raiſes pride; and it is eſſential to pride to turn our view on ourſelves with complacency and ſatisfaction.

Now, as the cauſes of theſe paſſions are very numerous and various, though their object be uniform and ſimple; it may be a ſubject of curioſity to conſider, what that circumſtance is, in which all theſe various cauſes agree: or in other words, what is the real efficient cauſe of the paſſion. We ſhall begin with Pride and Humility.

3. In order to explain the cauſes of theſe paſſions, we muſt reflect on certain principles, which, though they have a mighty influence on every operation both of the underſtanding and paſſions, are not commonly much

much inſiſted on by philoſophers. The firſt of theſe is the aſſociation of ideas, or that principle by which we make an eaſy tranſition from one idea to another. However uncertain and changeable our thoughts may be, they are not entirely without rule and method in their changes. They uſually paſs with regularity from one object to what reſembles it, is contiguous to it, or produced by it *. When one idea is preſent to the imagination, any other, united by theſe relations, naturally follows it, and enters with more facility by means of that introduction.

The ſecond property, which I ſhall obſerve in the human mind, is, a like aſſociation of impreſſions or emotions. All reſembling impreſſions are connected together; and no ſooner one ariſes, than the reſt naturally follow. Grief and diſappointment give riſe to anger, anger to envy, envy to malice, and malice to grief again. In like manner, our temper, when elevated with joy, naturally throws itſelf into love, generoſity, courage, pride, and other reſembling affections.

In the third place, it is obſervable of theſe two kinds of aſſociation, that they very much aſſiſt and forward each other, and that the tranſition is more eaſily made, where they both concur in the ſame object. Thus, a man, who, by an injury received from another, is very much diſcompoſed and ruffled in his temper, is apt to find a hundred ſubjects of hatred, diſcontent, impatience, fear, and other uneaſy paſſions; eſpecially if he can diſcover theſe ſubjects in or near the perſon who was the object of his firſt emotion. Thoſe principles, which forward the tranſition of ideas, here concur with thoſe which operate on the paſſions; and both, uniting

* See Inquiry concerning Human Underſtanding, Sect. III.

uniting in one action, beſtow on the mind a double impulſe.

Upon this occaſion I may cite a paſſage from an elegant writer, who expreſſes himſelf in the following manner *: "As the fancy delights in every thing that "is great, ſtrange, or beautiful, and is ſtill the more "pleaſed the more it finds of theſe perfections in the "ſame object, ſo it is capable of receiving new ſatis- "faction by the aſſiſtance of another ſenſe. Thus, "any continual ſound, as the muſic of birds, or a fall "of waters, awakens every moment the mind of the "beholder, and makes him more attentive to the ſe- "veral beauties of the place that lie before him. "Thus, if there ariſes a fragrancy of ſmells or per- "fumes, they heighten the pleaſure of the imagina- "tion, and make even the colours and verdure of the "landſcape appear more agreeable; for the ideas of "both ſenſes recommend each other, and are pleaſant- "er together than where they enter the mind ſepa- "rately: As the different colours of a picture, when "they are well diſpoſed, ſet off one another, and "receive an additional beauty from the advantage of "the ſituation." In theſe phænomena we may remark the aſſociation both of impreſſions and ideas, as well as the mutual aſſiſtance theſe aſſociations lend to each other.

4. It ſeems to me, that both theſe ſpecies of relation have place in producing Pride or Humility, and are the real, efficient cauſes of the paſſion.

With regard to the firſt relation, that of ideas, there can be no queſtion. Whatever we are proud of muſt, in ſome manner, belong to us. It is always our knowledge, our ſenſe, beauty, poſſeſſions, family, on

* ADDISON, Spectator, No. 412.

which we value ourſelves. Self, which is the object of the paſſion, muſt ſtill be related to that quality or circumſtance which cauſes the paſſion. There muſt be a connection between them; an eaſy tranſition of the imagination; or a facility of the conception in paſſing from one to the other. Where this connection is wanting, no object can either excite pride or humility; and the more you weaken the connection, the more you weaken the paſſion.

5. The only ſubject of inquiry is, whether there be a like relation of impreſſions or ſentiments wherever pride or humility is felt; whether the circumſtance, which cauſes the paſſion, previouſly excites a ſentiment ſimilar to the paſſion; and whether there be an only transfuſion of the one into the other.

The feeling or ſentiment of pride is agreeable; of humility, painful. An agreeable ſenſation is, therefore, related to the former; a painful, to the latter. And if we find, after examination, that every object which produces pride, produces alſo a ſeparate pleaſure; and every object which cauſes humility, excites in like manner a ſeparate uneaſineſs; we muſt allow, in that caſe, that the preſent theory is fully proved and aſcertained. The double relation of ideas and ſentiments will be acknowledged inconteſtible.

6. To begin with perſonal merit and demerit, the moſt obvious cauſes of theſe paſſions; it would be entirely foreign to our preſent purpoſe to examine the foundation of moral diſtinctions. It is ſufficient to obſerve, that the foregoing theory concerning the origin of the paſſions, may be defended on any hypotheſis. The moſt probable ſyſtem, which has been advanced to explain the difference between vice and virtue, is, that either from a primary conſtitution of nature, or from

a ſenſe of public or private intereſt, certain characters, upon the very view and contemplation, produce uneaſineſs; and others, in like manner, excite pleaſure. The uneaſineſs and ſatisfaction, produced in the ſpectator, are eſſential to vice and virtue. To approve of a character, is to feel delight upon its appearance. To diſapprove of it, is to be ſenſible of an uneaſineſs. The pain and pleaſure, therefore, being, in a manner, the primary ſource of blame or praiſe, muſt alſo be the cauſes of all their effects; and conſequently, the cauſes of pride and humility, which are the unavoidable attendants of that diſtinction.

But ſuppoſing this theory of morals ſhould not be received; it is ſtill evident that pain and pleaſure, if not the ſources of moral diſtinctions, are at leaſt inſeparable from them. A generous and noble character affords a ſatisfaction even in the ſurvey; and when preſented to us, though only in a poem or fable, never fails to charm and delight us. On the other hand, cruelty and treachery diſpleaſe from their very nature; nor is it poſſible ever to reconcile us to theſe qualities, either in ourſelves or others. Virtue, therefore, produces always a pleaſure diſtinct from the pride or ſelf-ſatisfaction which attends it: Vice, an uneaſineſs ſeparate from the humility or remorſe.

But a high or low conceit of ourſelves ariſes not from thoſe qualities alone of the mind, which, according to common ſyſtems of ethics, have been defined parts of moral duty; but from any other which have a connection with pleaſure or uneaſineſs. Nothing flatters our vanity more than the talent of pleaſing by our wit, good-humour, or any other accompliſhment; and nothing gives us a more ſenſible mortification, than a diſappointment in any attempt of that kind. No one

has ever been able to tell preciſely, what wit is, and to ſhow why ſuch a ſyſtem of thought muſt be received under that denomination, and ſuch another rejected. It is by taſte alone we can decide concerning it; nor are we poſſeſſed of any other ſtandard, by which we can form a judgment of this nature. Now, what is this taſte, from which true and falſe wit in a manner receive their being, and without which no thought can have a title to either of theſe denominations? It is plainly nothing but a ſenſation of pleaſure from true wit, and of diſguſt from falſe, without our being able to tell the reaſons of that ſatisfaction or uneaſineſs. The power of exciting theſe oppoſite ſenſations is, therefore, the very eſſence of true or falſe wit; and conſequently the cauſe of that vanity or mortification which ariſes from one or the other.

7. Beauty of all kinds gives us a peculiar delight and ſatisfaction; as deformity produces pain, upon whatever ſubject it may be placed, and whether ſurveyed in an animate or inanimate object. If the beauty or deformity belong to our own face, ſhape, or perſon, this pleaſure or uneaſineſs is converted into pride or humility; as having in this caſe all the circumſtances requiſite to produce a perfect tranſition, according to the preſent theory.

It would ſeem, that the very eſſence of beauty conſiſts in its power of producing pleaſure. All its effects, therefore, muſt proceed from this circumſtance; and if beauty is ſo univerſally the ſubject of vanity, it is only from its being the cauſe of pleaſure.

Concerning all other bodily accompliſhments, we may obſerve in general, that whatever in ourſelves is either uſeful, beautiful, or ſurpriſing, is an object of pride; and the contrary of humility. Theſe qualities agree

agree in producing a ſeparate pleaſure; and agree in nothing elſe.

We are vain of the ſurpriſing adventures which we have met with, the eſcapes which we have made, the dangers to which we have been expoſed; as well as of our ſurpriſing feats of vigour and activity. Hence the origin of vulgar lying; where men, without any intereſt, and merely out of vanity, heap up a number of extraordinary events, which are either the fictions of their brain, or, if true, have no connection with themſelves. Their fruitful invention ſupplies them with a variety of adventures; and where that talent is wanting, they appropriate ſuch as belong to others, in order to gratify their vanity: For between that paſſion, and the ſentiment of pleaſure, there is always a cloſe connection.

8. But though pride and humility have the qualities of our mind and body, that is, of ſelf, for their natural and more immediate cauſes; we find, by experience, that many other objects produce theſe affections. We found vanity upon houſes, gardens, equipage, and other external objects; as well as upon perſonal merit and accompliſhments. This happens when external objects acquire any particular relation to ourſelves, and are aſſociated or connected with us. A beautiful fiſh in the ocean, a well-proportioned animal in a foreſt, and, indeed, any thing which neither belongs nor is related to us, has no manner of influence on our vanity; whatever extraordinary qualities it may be endowed with, and whatever degree of ſurpriſe and admiration it may naturally occaſion. It muſt be ſomeway aſſociated with us, in order to touch our pride. Its idea muſt hang, in a manner, upon that of our-

ſelves; and the tranſition from one to the other muſt be eaſy and natural.

Men are vain of the beauty either of their country, or their county, or even of their pariſh. Here the idea of beauty plainly produces a pleaſure: This pleaſure is related to pride. The object or cauſe of this pleaſure is, by the ſuppoſition, related to ſelf, the object of pride. By this double relation of ſentiments and ideas, a tranſition is made from one to the other.

Men are alſo vain of the happy temperature of the climate in which they are born; of the fertility of their native ſoil; of the goodneſs of the wines, fruits, or victuals, produced by it; of the ſoftneſs or force of their language, with other particulars of that kind. Theſe objects have plainly a reference to the pleaſures of ſenſe, and are originally conſidered as agreeable to the feeling, taſte or hearing. How could they become cauſes of pride, except by means of that tranſition above explained?

There are ſome who diſcover a vanity of an oppoſite kind, and affect to depreciate their own country, in compariſon of thoſe to which they have travelled. Theſe perſons find, when they are at home, and ſurrounded with their countrymen, that the ſtrong relation between them and their own nation is ſhared with ſo many, that it is in a manner loſt to them; whereas, that diſtant relation to a foreign country which is formed by their having ſeen it, and lived in it, is augmented by their conſidering how few have done the ſame. For this reaſon, they always admire the beauty, utility, and rarity of what they met with abroad, above what they find at home.

Since we can be vain of a country, climate or any inanimate object, which bears a relation to us; it is

no

no wonder we ſhould be vain of the qualities of thoſe who are connected with us by blood or friendſhip. Accordingly we find, that any qualities which, when belonging to ourſelves, produce pride, produce alſo, in a leſs degree, the ſame affection, when diſcovered in perſons related to us. The beauty, addreſs, merit, credit, and honours of their kindred, are carefully diſplayed by the proud, and are conſiderable ſources of their vanity.

As we are proud of riches in ourſelves, we deſire, in order to gratify our vanity, that every one who has any connection with us, ſhould likewiſe be poſſeſſed of them, and are aſhamed of ſuch as are mean or poor among our friends and relations. Our forefathers being regarded as our neareſt relations; every one naturally affects to be of a good family, and to be deſcended from a long ſucceſſion of rich and honourable anceſtors.

Thoſe who boaſt of the antiquity of their families, are glad when they can join this circumſtance, that their anceſtors, for many generations, have been uninterrupted proprietors of the ſame portion of land, and that their family has never changed its poſſeſſions, or been tranſplanted into any other county or province. It is an additional ſubject of vanity, when they can boaſt, that theſe poſſeſſions have been tranſmitted through a deſcent, compoſed entirely of males, and that the honours and fortune have never paſſed through any female. Let us endeavour to explain theſe phænomena from the foregoing theory.

When any one values himſelf on the antiquity of his family, the ſubjects of his vanity are not merely the extent of time and number of anceſtors (for in that reſpect all mankind are alike); but theſe circumſtances,

joined to the riches and credit of his anceſtors, which are ſuppoſed to reflect a luſtre on himſelf, upon account of his connection with them. Since therefore the paſſion depends on the connection, whatever ſtrengthens the connection muſt alſo increaſe the paſſion; and whatever weakens the connection muſt diminiſh the paſſion. But it is evident, that the ſameneſs of the poſſeſſions muſt ſtrengthen the relation of ideas, ariſing from blood and kindred, and convey the fancy with greater facility from one generation to another; from the remoteſt anceſtors to their poſterity, who are both their heirs and their deſcendants. By this facility, the ſentiment is tranſmitted more entire, and excites a greater degree of pride and vanity.

The caſe is the ſame with the tranſmiſſion of the honours and fortune, through a ſucceſſion of males, without their paſſing through any female. It is an obvious quality of human nature, that the imagination naturally turns to whatever is important and conſiderable; and where two objects are preſented, a ſmall and a great, it uſually leaves the former, and dwells entirely on the latter. This is the reaſon, why children commonly bear their father's name, and are eſteemed to be of a nobler or meaner birth, according to his family. And though the mother ſhould be poſſeſſed of ſuperior qualities to the father, as often happens, the general rule prevails, notwithſtanding the exception, according to the doctrine, which ſhall be explained afterwards. Nay, even when a ſuperiority of any kind is ſo great, or when any other reaſons have ſuch an effect, as to make the children rather repreſent the mother's family than the father's, the general rule ſtill retains an efficacy, ſufficient to weaken the relation, and make a kind of breach in the line of anceſtors. The imagination

imagination runs not along them with the ſame facility, nor is able to transfer the honour and credit of the anceſtors to their poſterity of the ſame name and family ſo readily, as when the tranſition is conformable to the general rule, and paſſes through the male line, from father to ſon, or from brother to brother.

9. But property, as it gives us the fulleſt power and authority over any object, is the relation which has the greateſt influence on theſe paſſions *.

Every thing belonging to a vain man, is the beſt that is any where to be found. His houſes, equipage, furniture, clothes, horſes, hounds, excel all others, in his conceit; and it is eaſy to obſerve, that, from the leaſt advantage in any of theſe, he draws a new ſubject of pride and vanity. His wine, if you will believe him, has a finer flavour than any other; his cookery is more exquiſite; his table more orderly; his ſervants more expert; the air, in which he lives, more healthful; the ſoil, which he cultivates, more fertile; his fruits ripen earlier, and to greater perfection: Such a thing is remarkable for its novelty; ſuch another for its antiquity. This is the workmanſhip of a famous artiſt; that belonged once to ſuch a prince or great man. All objects, in a word, which are uſeful, beautiful, or ſurpriſing, or are related to ſuch, may, by means of property, give riſe to this paſſion. Theſe all agree in giving pleaſure. This alone is common to them; and therefore muſt be the quality, that produces the paſſion, which is their common effect. As every new inſtance is a new argument, and as the inſtances are here without number; it would ſeem, that this theory is ſufficiently confirmed by experience.

Riches

* See NOTE [R].

Riches imply the power of acquiring whatever is agreeable; and as they comprehend many particular objects of vanity, neceſſarily become one of the chief cauſes of that paſſion.

10. Our opinions of all kinds are ſtrongly affected by ſociety and ſympathy, and it is almoſt impoſſible for us to ſupport any principle or ſentiment, againſt the univerſal conſent of every one, with whom we have any friendſhip or correſpondence. But of all our opinions, thoſe which we form in our own favour; however lofty or preſuming; are, at bottom, the fraileſt, and the moſt eaſily ſhaken by the contradiction and oppoſition of others. Our great concern, in this caſe, makes us ſoon alarmed, and keeps our paſſions upon the watch: Our conſciouſneſs of partiality ſtill makes us dread a miſtake: And the very difficulty of judging concerning an object, which is never ſet at a due diſtance from us, nor is ſeen in a proper point of view, makes us hearken anxiouſly to the opinions of others, who are better qualified to form juſt opinions concerning us. Hence that ſtrong love of fame, with which all mankind are poſſeſſed. It is in order to fix and confirm their favourable opinion of themſelves, not from any original paſſion, that they ſeek the applauſes of others. And when a man deſires to be praiſed, it is for the ſame reaſon, that a beauty is pleaſed with ſurveying herſelf in a favourable looking-glaſs, and ſeeing the reflection of her own charms.

Though it be difficult, in all points of ſpeculation, to diſtinguiſh a cauſe, which increaſes an effect, from one, which ſolely produces it; yet in the preſent caſe the phænomena ſeem pretty ſtrong and ſatisfactory in confirmation of the foregoing principle.

We

We receive a much greater ſatisfaction from the approbation of thoſe whom we ourſelves eſteem and approve of, than of thoſe whom we contemn and deſpiſe.

When eſteem is obtained after a long and intimate acquaintance, it gratifies our vanity in a peculiar manner.

The ſuffrage of thoſe, who are ſhy and backward in giving praiſe, is attended with an additional reliſh and enjoyment, if we can obtain it in our favour.

Where a great man is delicate in his choice of favourites, every one courts with greater earneſtneſs his countenance and protection.

Praiſe never gives us much pleaſure, unleſs it concur with our own opinion, and extol us for thoſe qualities, in which we chiefly excel.

Theſe phænomena ſeem to prove, that the favourable ſuffrages of the world are regarded only as authorities, or as confirmations of our own opinion. And if the opinions of others have more influence in this ſubject than in any other, it is eaſily accounted for from the nature of the ſubject.

11. Thus, few objects, however related to us, and whatever pleaſure they produce, are able to excite a great degree of pride or ſelf-ſatisfaction; unleſs they be alſo obvious to others, and engage the approbation of the ſpectators. What diſpoſition of mind ſo deſirable as the peaceful, reſigned, contented; which readily ſubmits to all the diſpenſations of providence, and preſerves a conſtant ſerenity amidſt the greateſt misfortunes and diſappointments? Yet this diſpoſition, though acknowledged to be a virtue or excellence, is ſeldom the foundation of great vanity or ſelf-applauſe; having no brilliancy or exterior luſtre, and rather cheering the heart,

heart, than animating the behaviour and converſation. The caſe is the ſame with many other qualities of the mind, body, or fortune; and this circumſtance, as well as the double relations above mentioned, muſt be admitted to be of conſequence in the production of theſe paſſions.

A ſecond circumſtance, which is of conſequence in this affair, is the conſtancy and durableneſs of the object. What is very caſual and inconſtant, beyond the common courſe of human affairs, gives little joy, and leſs pride. We are not much ſatisfied with the thing itſelf; and are ſtill leſs apt to feel any new degree of ſelf-ſatisfaction upon its account. We foreſee and anticipate its change; which makes us little ſatisfied with the thing itſelf: We compare it to ourſelves, whoſe exiſtence is more durable; by which means its inconſtancy appears ſtill greater. It ſeems ridiculous to make ourſelves the object of a paſſion, on account of a quality or poſſeſſion, which is of ſo much ſhorter duration, and attends us during ſo ſmall a part of our exiſtence.

A third circumſtance, not to be neglected, is, that the objects, in order to produce pride or ſelf-value, muſt be peculiar to us, or at leaſt common to us with a few others. The advantages of ſun-ſhine, good weather, a happy climate, &c. diſtinguiſh us not from any of our companions, and give us no preference or ſuperiority. The compariſon, which we are every moment apt to make, preſents no inference to our advantage; and we ſtill remain, notwithſtanding theſe enjoyments, on a level with all our friends and acquaintance.

As health and ſickneſs vary inceſſantly to all men, and there is no one, who is ſolely or certainly fixed in either;

either; theſe accidental bleſſings and calamities are in a manner ſeparated from us, and are not conſidered as a foundation for vanity or humiliation. But wherever a malady of any kind is ſo rooted in our conſtitution, that we no longer entertain any hope of recovery, from that moment it damps our ſelf-conceit, as is evident in old men, whom nothing mortifies more than the conſideration of their age and infirmities. They endeavour, as long as poſſible, to conceal their blindneſs and deafneſs, their rheums and gouts; nor do they ever avow them without reluctance and uneaſineſs. And though young men are not aſhamed of every head-ach or cold which they fall into; yet no topic is more proper to mortify human pride, and make us entertain a mean opinion of our nature, than this, that we are every moment of our lives ſubject to ſuch infirmities. This proves, that bodily pain and ſickneſs are in themſelves proper cauſes of humility; though the cuſtom of eſtimating every thing, by compariſon, more than by its intrinſic worth and value, makes us overlook thoſe calamities, which we find incident to every one, and cauſes us to form an idea of our merit and character, independent of them.

We are aſhamed of ſuch maladies as affect others, and are either dangerous or diſagreeable to them. Of the epilepſy; becauſe it gives a horror to every one preſent: Of the itch; becauſe it is infectious: Of the king's evil; becauſe it often goes to poſterity. Men always conſider the ſentiments of others in their judgment of themſelves.

A fourth circumſtance, which has an influence on theſe paſſions, is general rules; by which we form a notion of different ranks of men, ſuitable to the power or riches of which they are poſſeſſed; and this notion is

is not changed by any peculiarities of the health or temper of the perſons, which may deprive them of all enjoyment in their poſſeſſions. Cuſtom readily carries us beyond the juſt bounds in our paſſions, as well as in our reaſonings.

It may not be amiſs to obſerve on this occaſion, that the influence of general rules and maxims on the paſſions very much contributes to facilitate the effects of all the principles or internal mechaniſm which we here explain. For it ſeems evident, that if a perſon full grown, and of the ſame nature with ourſelves, were on a ſudden tranſported into our world, he would be much embarraſſed with every object, and would not readily determine what degree of love or hatred, of pride or humility, or of any other paſſion, ſhould be excited by it. The paſſions are often varied by very inconſiderable principles; and theſe do not always play with perfect regularity, eſpecially on the firſt trial. But as cuſtom or practice has brought to light all theſe principles, and has ſettled the juſt value of every thing; this muſt certainly contribute to the eaſy production of the paſſions, and guide us, by means of general eſtabliſhed rules, in the proportions which we ought to obſerve in preferring one object to another. This remark may, perhaps, ſerve to obviate difficulties that may ariſe concerning ſome cauſes which we here aſcribe to particular paſſions, and which may be eſteemed too refined to operate ſo univerſally and certainly as they are found to do.

SECT. III.

1. In running over all the cauſes which produce the paſſion of pride or that of humility, it would readily occur, that the ſame circumſtance, if transferred from ourſelves

ourſelves to another perſon, would render him the object of love or hatred, eſteem or contempt. The virtue, genius, beauty, family, riches, and authority of others, beget favourable ſentiments in their behalf; and their vice, folly, deformity, poverty, and meanneſs, excite the contrary ſentiments. The double relation of impreſſions and ideas ſtill operates on theſe paſſions of love and hatred; as on the former of pride and humility. Whatever gives a ſeparate pleaſure or pain, and is related to another perſon, or connected with him, makes him the object of our affection or diſguſt.

Hence too injury or contempt towards us is one of the greateſt ſources of our hatred; ſervices or eſteem, of our friendſhip.

2. Sometimes a relation to ourſelves excites affection towards any perſon. But there is always here implied a relation of ſentiments, without which the other relation would have no influence *.

A perſon who is related to us, or connected with us, by blood, by ſimilitude of fortune, of adventures, profeſſion, or country, ſoon becomes an agreeable companion to us; becauſe we enter eaſily and familiarly into his ſentiments and conceptions: Nothing is ſtrange or new to us: Our imagination, paſſing from ſelf, which is ever intimately preſent to us, runs ſmoothly along the relation or connection, and conceives with a full ſympathy the perſon who is nearly related to ſelf. He renders himſelf immediately acceptable, and is at once on an eaſy footing with us: No diſtance, no reſerve has place, where the perſon introduced is ſuppoſed ſo cloſely connected with us.

Relation

* The affection of parents to children ſeems founded on an original inſtinct. The affection towards other relations depends on the principles here explained.

Relation has here the ſame influence as cuſtom or acquaintance in exciting affection; and from like cauſes. The eaſe and ſatisfaction, which, in both caſes, attend our intercourſe or commerce, is the ſource of the friendſhip.

3. The paſſions of love and hatred are always followed by, or rather conjoined with, benevolence and anger. It is this conjunction which chiefly diſtinguiſhes theſe affections from pride and humility. For pride and humility are pure emotions in the ſoul, unattended with any deſire, and not immediately exciting us to action. But love and hatred are not complete within themſelves, nor reſt in that emotion which they produce; but carry the mind to ſomething farther. Love is always followed by a deſire of happineſs to the perſon beloved, and an averſion to his miſery: As hatred produces a deſire of the miſery, and an averſion to the happineſs of the perſon hated. Theſe oppoſite deſires ſeem to be originally and primarily conjoined with the paſſions of love and hatred. It is a conſtitution of nature of which we can give no farther explication.

4. Compaſſion frequently ariſes where there is no preceding eſteem or friendſhip; and compaſſion is an uneaſineſs in the ſufferings of another. It ſeems to ſpring from the intimate and ſtrong conception of his ſufferings; and our imagination proceeds by degrees from the lively idea to the real feeling of another's miſery.

Malice and envy alſo ariſe in the mind without any preceding hatred or injury; though their tendency is exactly the ſame with that of anger and ill-will. The compariſon of ourſelves with others, ſeems to be the ſource of envy and malice. The more unhappy another is,

is, the more happy do we ourſelves appear in our own conception.

5. The ſimilar tendency of compaſſion to that of benevolence, and of envy to anger, forms a very cloſe relation between theſe two ſets of paſſions; though of a different kind from that which was inſiſted on above. It is not a reſemblance of feeling or ſentiment, but a reſemblance of tendency or direction. Its effect, however, is the ſame in producing an aſſociation of paſſions. Compaſſion is ſeldom or never felt, without ſome mixture of tenderneſs or friendſhip; and envy is naturally accompanied with anger or ill-will. To deſire the happineſs of another, from whatever motive, is a good preparative to affection; and to delight in another's miſery, almoſt unavoidably begets averſion towards him.

Even where intereſt is the ſource of our concern, it is commonly attended with the ſame conſequences. A partner is a natural object of friendſhip; a rival, of enmity.

6. Poverty, meanneſs, diſappointment, produce contempt and diſlike: But when theſe misfortunes are very great, or are repreſented to us in very ſtrong colours, they excite compaſſion, and tenderneſs, and friendſhip. How is this contradiction to be accounted for? The poverty and meanneſs of another, in their common appearance, gives us uneaſineſs, by a ſpecies of imperfect ſympathy; and this uneaſineſs produces averſion or diſlike, from the reſemblance of ſentiment. But when we enter more intimately into another's concerns, and wiſh for his happineſs, as well as feel his miſery, friendſhip or good-will ariſes from the ſimilar tendency of the inclinations.

A bankrupt, at firſt, while the idea of his misfortunes is freſh and recent, and while the compariſon of his preſent unhappy ſituation with his former proſperity operates ſtrongly upon us, meets with compaſſion and friendſhip. After theſe ideas are weakened or obliterated by time, he is in danger of compaſſion and contempt.

7. In reſpect, there is a mixture of humility, with the eſteem or affection: In contempt, a mixture of pride.

The amorous paſſion is uſually compounded of complacency in beauty, a bodily appetite, and friendſhip or affection. The cloſe relation of theſe ſentiments is very obvious, as well as their origin from each other, by means of that relation. Were there no other phænomenon to reconcile us to the preſent theory, this alone, methinks, were ſufficient.

SECT. IV.

1. The preſent theory of the paſſions depends entirely on the double relations of ſentiments and ideas, and the mutual aſſiſtance which theſe relations lend to each other. It may not, therefore, be improper to illuſtrate theſe principles by ſome farther inſtances.

2. The virtues, talents, accompliſhments, and poſſeſſions of others, make us love and eſteem them; becauſe theſe objects excite a pleaſing ſenſation which is related to love: and as they have alſo a relation or connection with the perſon, this union of ideas forwards the union of ſentiments, according to the foregoing reaſoning.

But ſuppoſe that the perſon whom we love is alſo related to us by blood, country, or friendſhip; it is evident,

evident, that a ſpecies of pride muſt alſo be excited by his accompliſhments and poſſeſſions; there being the ſame double relation which we have all along inſiſted on. The perſon is related to us, or there is an eaſy tranſition of thought from him to us; and the ſentiments, excited by his advantages and virtues, are agreeable, and conſequently related to pride. Accordingly we find, that people are naturally vain of the good qualities or high fortune of their friends and countrymen.

3. But it is obſervable, that if we reverſe the order of the paſſions, the ſame effect does not follow. We paſs eaſily from love and affection to pride and vanity; but not from the latter paſſions to the former, though all the relations be the ſame. We love not thoſe who are related to us, on account of our own merit; though they are naturally vain on account of our merit. What is the reaſon of this difference? The tranſition of the imagination to ourſelves, from objects related to us, is always eaſy; both on account of the relation, which facilitates the tranſition, and becauſe we there paſs from remoter objects to thoſe which are contiguous. But in paſſing from ourſelves to objects related to us; though the former principle forwards the tranſition of thought, yet the latter oppoſes it; and conſequently there is not the ſame eaſy transfuſion of paſſions from pride to love, as from love to pride.

4. The virtues, ſervices, and fortune of one man inſpire us readily with eſteem and affection for another related to him. The ſon of our friend is naturally entitled to our friendſhip: The kindred of a very great man value themſelves, and are valued by others on account of that relation. The force of the double relation is here fully diſplayed.

5. The following are inſtances of another kind, where the operation of theſe principles may ſtill be diſcovered. Envy ariſes from a ſuperiority in others; but it is obſervable, that it is not the great diſproportion between us which excites that paſſion, but, on the contrary, our proximity. A great diſproportion cuts off the relation of the ideas, and either keeps us from comparing ourſelves with what is more remote from us, or diminiſhes the effects of the compariſon.

A poet is not apt to envy a philoſopher, or a poet of a different kind, of a different nation, or of a different age. All theſe differences, if they do not prevent, at leaſt weaken, the compariſon, and conſequently the paſſion.

This too is the reaſon why all objects appear great or little, merely by a compariſon with thoſe of the ſame ſpecies. A mountain neither magnifies nor diminiſhes a horſe in our eyes: But when a Flemiſh and a Welſh horſe are ſeen together, the one appears greater and the other leſs, than when viewed apart.

From the ſame principle we may account for that remark of hiſtorians, that any party, in a civil war, or even factious diviſions, always chooſe to call in a foreign enemy at any hazard, rather than ſubmit to their fellow-citizens. Guicciardin applies this remark to the wars in Italy; where the relations between the different ſtates are, properly ſpeaking, nothing but of name, language, and contiguity. Yet even theſe relations, when joined with ſuperiority, by making the compariſon more natural, make it likewiſe more grievous, and cauſe men to ſearch for ſome other ſuperiority which may be attended with no relation; and, by that means, may have a leſs ſenſible influence on the imagination. When we cannot break the aſſociation,

we

we feel a ſtronger deſire to remove the ſuperiority. This ſeems to be the reaſon why travellers, though commonly laviſh of their praiſe to the Chineſe and Perſians, take care to depreciate thoſe neighbouring nations which may ſtand upon a footing of rivalſhip with their native country.

6. The fine arts afford us parallel inſtances. Should an author compoſe a treatiſe, of which one part was ſerious and profound, another light and humorous; every one would condemn ſo ſtrange a mixture, and would blame him for the neglect of all rules of art and criticiſm. Yet we accuſe not Prior for joining his Alma and Solomon in the ſame volume; though that amiable poet has perfectly ſucceeded in the gaiety of the one, as well as in the melancholy of the other. Even ſuppoſe the reader ſhould peruſe theſe two compoſitions without any interval, he would feel little or no difficulty in the change of the paſſions. Why? but becauſe he conſiders theſe performances as entirely different; and by that break in the ideas, breaks the progreſs of the affections, and hinders the one from influencing or contradicting the other.

An heroic and burleſque deſign, united in one picture, would be monſtrous, though we place two pictures of ſo oppoſite a character in the ſame chamber, and even cloſe together, without any ſcruple.

7. It needs be no matter of wonder, that the eaſy tranſition of the imagination ſhould have ſuch an influence on all the paſſions. It is this very circumſtance which forms all the relations and connections amongſt objects. We know no real connection between one thing and another: We only know, that the idea of one thing is aſſociated with that of another, and that the imagination makes an eaſy tranſition between them.

And as the eaſy tranſition of ideas, and that of ſentiments, mutually aſſiſt each other; we might beforehand expect, that this principle muſt have a mighty influence on all our internal movements and affections: And experience ſufficiently confirms the theory.

For, not to repeat all the foregoing inſtances, ſuppoſe that I were travelling with a companion through a country to which we are both utter ſtrangers; it is evident, that, if the proſpects be beautiful, the roads agreeable, and the fields finely cultivated; this may ſerve to put me in good humour, both with myſelf and fellow-traveller. But as the country has no connection with myſelf or friend, it can never be the immediate cauſe either of ſelf-value or of regard to him: And therefore, if I found not the paſſion on ſome other object which bears to one of us a cloſer relation, my emotions are rather to be conſidered as the overflowings of an elevated or humane diſpoſition, than as an eſtabliſhed paſſion. But ſuppoſing the agreeable proſpect before us to be ſurveyed either from his country ſeat or mine; this new connection of ideas gives a new direction to the ſentiment of pleaſure derived from the proſpect, and raiſes the emotion of regard or vanity, according to the nature of the connection. There is not here, methinks, much room for doubt or difficulty.

SECT. V.

1. It ſeems evident, that reaſon, in a ſtrict ſenſe, as meaning the judgment of truth and falſehood, can never, of itſelf, be any motive to the will, and can have no influence but ſo far as it touches ſome paſſion or affection. Abſtract relations of ideas are the object of curioſity,

curioſity, not of volition: And matters of fact, where they are neither good nor evil, where they neither excite deſire nor averſion, are totally indifferent; and whether known or unknown, whether miſtaken or rightly apprehended, cannot be regarded as any motive to action.

2. What is commonly, in a popular ſenſe, called reaſon, and is ſo much recommended in moral diſcourſes, is nothing but a general and a calm paſſion, which takes a comprehenſive and a diſtant view of its object, and actuates the will, without exciting any ſenſible emotion. A man, we ſay, is diligent in his profeſſion from reaſon; that is, from a calm deſire of riches and a fortune. A man adheres to juſtice from reaſon; that is, from a calm regard to public good, or to a character with himſelf and others.

3. The ſame objects which recommend themſelves to reaſon, in this ſenſe of the word, are alſo the objects of what we call paſſion, when they are brought near to us, and acquire ſome other advantages, either of external ſituation, or congruity to our internal temper; and by that means excite a turbulent and ſenſible emotion. Evil, at a great diſtance, is avoided, we ſay, from reaſon: Evil, near at hand, produces averſion, horror, fear, and is the object of paſſion.

4. The common error of metaphyſicians has lain in aſcribing the direction of the will entirely to one of theſe principles, and ſuppoſing the other to have no influence. Men often act knowingly againſt their intereſt: It is not therefore the view of the greateſt poſſible good which always influences them. Men often counteract a violent paſſion, in proſecution of their diſtant intereſts and deſigns: It is not therefore the preſent uneaſineſs alone which determines them. In general

we may obſerve, that both theſe principles operate on the will; and where they are contrary, that either of them prevails, according to the general character or preſent diſpoſition of the perſon. What we call ſtrength of mind implies the prevalence of the calm paſſions above the violent; though we may eaſily obſerve, that there is no perſon ſo conſtantly poſſeſſed of this virtue, as never, on any occaſion, to yield to the ſolicitation of violent affection and deſire. From theſe variations of temper proceeds the great difficulty of deciding with regard to the future actions and reſolutions of men, where there is any contrariety of motives and paſſions.

SECT. VI.

1. We ſhall here enumerate ſome of thoſe circumſtances, which render a paſſion calm or violent, which heighten or diminiſh any emotion.

It is a property in human nature, that any emotion which attends a paſſion, is eaſily converted into it; though in their natures they be originally different from, and even contrary to, each other. It is true, in order to cauſe a perfect union amongſt paſſions, and make one produce the other, there is always required a double relation, according to the theory above delivered: But when two paſſions are already produced by their ſeparate cauſes, and are both preſent in the mind, they readily mingle and unite; though they have but one relation, and ſometimes without any. The predominant paſſion ſwallows up the inferior, and converts it into itſelf. The ſpirits, when once excited, eaſily receive a change in their direction; and it is natural to imagine, that this change will come from the prevailing affection. The connection is in many caſes cloſer between

between any two paſſions, than between any paſſion and indifference.

When a perſon is once heartily in love, the little faults and caprices of his miſtreſs, the jealouſies and quarrels to which that commerce is ſo ſubject, however unpleaſant they be, and rather connected with anger and hatred, are yet found, in many inſtances, to give additional force to the prevailing paſſion. It is a common artifice of politicians, when they would affect any perſon very much by a matter of fact of which they intend to inform him, firſt to excite his curioſity; delay as long as poſſible the ſatisfying of it; and by that means raiſe his anxiety and impatience to the utmoſt, before they give him a full inſight into the buſineſs. They know, that this curioſity will precipitate him into the paſſion which they purpoſe to raiſe, and will aſſiſt the object in its influence on the mind. A ſoldier advancing to battle, is naturally inſpired with courage and confidence, when he thinks on his friends and fellow-ſoldiers; and is ſtruck with fear and terror when he reflects on the enemy. Whatever new emotion, therefore, proceeds from the former, naturally increaſes the courage; as the ſame emotion proceeding from the latter, augments the fear. Hence, in martial diſcipline, the uniformity and luſtre of habit, the regularity of figures and motions, with all the pomp and majeſty of war, encourage ourſelves and our allies; while the ſame objects in the enemy ſtrike terror into us, though agreeable and beautiful in themſelves.

Hope is, in itſelf, an agreeable paſſion, and allied to friendſhip and benevolence; yet is it able ſometimes to blow up anger, when that is the predominant paſſion. *Spes addita ſuſcitat iras.* Virg.

2. Since

2. Since paſſions, however independent, are naturally tranſfuſed into each other, if they be both preſent at the ſame time; it follows, that when good or evil is placed in ſuch a ſituation as to cauſe any particular emotion, beſides its direct paſſion of deſire or averſion, this latter paſſion muſt acquire new force and violence.

3. This often happens, when any object excites contrary paſſions. For it is obſervable, that an oppoſition of paſſions commonly cauſes a new emotion in the ſpirits, and produces more diſorder than the concurrence of any two affections of equal force. This new emotion is eaſily converted into the predominant paſſion, and in many inſtances, is obſerved to increaſe its violence, beyond the pitch at which it would have arrived, had it met with no oppoſition. Hence we naturally deſire what is forbid, and often take a pleaſure in performing actions, merely becauſe they are unlawful. The notion of duty, when oppoſite to the paſſions, is not always able to overcome them; and when it fails of that effect, is apt rather to increaſe and irritate them, by producing an oppoſition in our motives and principles.

4. The ſame effect follows, whether the oppoſition ariſe from internal motives or external obſtacles. The paſſion commonly acquires new force in both caſes. The efforts, which the mind makes to ſurmount the obſtacle, excite the ſpirits, and enliven the paſſion.

5. Uncertainty has the ſame effect as oppoſition. The agitation of the thought, the quick turns which it makes from one view to another, the variety of paſſions which ſucceed each other, according to the different views: All theſe produce an emotion in the mind; and

and this emotion transfuſes itſelf into the predominant paſſion.

Security, on the contrary, diminiſhes the paſſions. The mind, when left to itſelf, immediately languiſhes; and, in order to preſerve its ardour, muſt be every moment ſupported by a new flow of paſſion. For the ſame reaſon, deſpair, though contrary to ſecurity, has a like influence.

6. Nothing more powerfully excites any affection than to conceal ſome part of its object, by throwing it into a kind of ſhade, which at the ſame time that it ſhows enough to prepoſſeſs us in favour of the object, leaves ſtill ſome work for the imagination. Beſides that obſcurity is always attended with a kind of uncertainty; the effort, which the fancy makes to complete the idea, rouzes the ſpirits, and gives an additional force to the paſſion.

7. As deſpair and ſecurity, though contrary, produce the ſame effects; ſo, abſence is obſerved to have contrary effects, and, in different circumſtances, either increaſes or diminiſhes our affection. Rochefoucault has very well remarked, that abſence deſtroys weak paſſions, but increaſes ſtrong; as the wind extinguiſhes a candle, but blows up a fire. Long abſence naturally weakens our idea, and diminiſhes the paſſion: But where the affection is ſo ſtrong and lively as to ſupport itſelf, the uneaſineſs, ariſing from abſence, increaſes the paſſion, and gives it new force and influence.

8. When the ſoul applies itſelf to the performance of any action, or the conception of any object to which it is not accuſtomed, there is a certain unpliableneſs in the faculties, and a difficulty of the ſpirits moving in their new direction: As this difficulty excites the ſpirits, it is the ſource of wonder, ſurpriſe, and of all the

the emotions which ariſe from novelty; and is in itſelf agreeable, like every thing which enlivens the mind to a moderate degree. But though ſurpriſe be agreeable in itſelf, yet, as it puts the ſpirits in agitation, it not only augments our agreeable affections, but alſo our painful, according to the foregoing principle. Hence every thing that is new is moſt affecting, and gives us either more pleaſure or pain, than what, ſtrictly ſpeaking, ſhould naturally follow from it. When it often returns upon us, the novelty wears off, the paſſions ſubſide; the hurry of the ſpirits is over; and we ſurvey the object with greater tranquillity.

9. The imagination and affections have a cloſe union together. The vivacity of the former gives force to the latter. Hence the proſpect of any pleaſure, with which we are acquainted, affects us more than any other pleaſure which we may own ſuperior, but of whoſe nature we are wholly ignorant. Of the one we can form a particular and determinate idea: The other we conceive under the general notion of pleaſure.

Any ſatisfaction which we lately enjoyed, and of which the memory is freſh and recent, operates on the will with more violence, than another of which the traces are decayed and almoſt obliterated.

A pleaſure, which is ſuitable to the way of life in which we are engaged, excites more our deſire and appetite than another which is foreign to it.

Nothing is more capable of infuſing any paſſion into the mind than eloquence, by which objects are repreſented in the ſtrongeſt and moſt lively colours. The bare opinion of another, eſpecially when enforced with paſſion, will cauſe an idea to have an influence upon us, though that idea might otherwiſe have been entirely neglected.

It

It is remarkable, that lively paſſions commonly attend a lively imagination. In this reſpect, as well as in others, the force of the paſſion depends as much on the temper of the perſon, as on the nature and ſituation of the object.

What is diſtant, either in place or time, has not equal influence with what is near and contiguous.

*** *** ***

I pretend not to have here exhauſted this ſubject. It is ſufficient for my purpoſe, if I have made it appear, that, in the production and conduct of the paſſions, there is a certain regular mechaniſm, which is ſuſceptible of as accurate a diſquiſition as the laws of motion, optics, hydroſtatics, or any part of natural philoſophy.

AN

AN INQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS.

SECTION I.

Of the General Principles of Morals.

DISPUTES with men pertinaciouſly obſtinate in their principles, are of all others the moſt irkſome; except, perhaps, thoſe with perſons entirely diſingenuous, who really do not believe the opinions they defend, but engage in the controverſy, from affectation, from a ſpirit of oppoſition, or from a deſire of ſhowing wit and ingenuity ſuperior to the reſt of mankind. The ſame blind adherence to their own arguments is to be expected in both; the ſame contempt of their antagoniſts; and the ſame paſſionate vehemence in enforcing ſophiſtry and falſehood: And as reaſoning is not the

the ſource whence either diſputant derives his tenets; it is in vain to expect that any logic, which ſpeaks not to the affections, will ever engage him to embrace ſounder principles.

Thoſe who have denied the reality of moral diſtinctions, may be ranked among the diſingenuous diſputants; nor is it conceivable, that any human creature could ever ſeriouſly believe, that all characters and actions were alike entitled to the affection and regard of every one. The difference, which nature has placed between one man and another, is ſo wide, and this difference is ſtill ſo much farther widened by education, example, and habit, that, where the oppoſite extremes come at once under our apprehenſion, there is no ſcepticiſm ſo ſcrupulous, and ſcarce any aſſurance ſo determined, as abſolutely to deny all diſtinction between them. Let a man's inſenſibility be ever ſo great, he muſt often be touched with the images of RIGHT and WRONG; and let his prejudices be ever ſo obſtinate, he muſt obſerve, that others are ſuſceptible of like impreſſions. The only way, therefore, of converting an antagoniſt of this kind, is to leave him to himſelf. For, finding that nobody keeps up the controverſy with him, it is probable he will, at laſt, of himſelf, from mere wearineſs, come over to the ſide of common ſenſe and reaſon.

There has been a controverſy ſtarted of late, much better worth examination, concerning the general foundation of MORALS; whether they be derived from REASON or from SENTIMENT; whether we attain the knowledge of them by a chain of argument and induction, or by an immediate feeling and finer internal ſenſe; whether, like all ſound judgment of truth and falſehood, they ſhould be the ſame to every rational intelligent being;

being; or, whether, like the perception of beauty and deformity, they be founded entirely on the particular fabric and conſtitution of the human ſpecies.

The ancient philoſophers, though they often affirm that virtue is nothing but conformity to reaſon, yet, in general, ſeem to conſider morals as deriving their exiſtence from taſte and ſentiment. On the other hand, our modern inquirers, though they alſo talk much of the beauty of virtue, and deformity of vice, yet have commonly endeavoured to account for theſe diſtinctions by metaphyſical reaſonings, and by deductions from the moſt abſtract principles of the underſtanding. Such confuſion reigned in theſe ſubjects, that an oppoſition of the greateſt conſequence could prevail between one ſyſtem and another, and even in the parts of almoſt each individual ſyſtem; and yet no body, till very lately, was ever ſenſible of it. The elegant Lord Shafteſbury, who firſt gave occaſion to remark this diſtinction, and who, in general, adhered to the principles of the ancients, is not, himſelf, entirely free from the ſame confuſion.

It muſt be acknowledged, that both ſides of the queſtion are ſuſceptible of ſpecious arguments. Moral diſtinctions, it may be ſaid, are diſcernible by pure reaſon: Elſe, whence the many diſputes that reign in common life, as well as in philoſophy, with regard to this ſubject? the long chain of proofs often produced on both ſides; the examples cited, the authorities appealed to, the analogies employed, the fallacies detected, the inferences drawn, and the ſeveral concluſions adjuſted to their proper principles? Truth is diſputable; not taſte. What exiſts in the nature of things is the ſtandard of our judgment; what each man feels within himſelf is the ſtandard of ſentiment. Propoſi-

tions

tions in geometry may be proved, ſyſtems in phyſics may be controverted; but the harmony of verſe, the tenderneſs of paſſion, the brilliancy of wit, muſt give immediate pleaſure. No man reaſons concerning another's beauty; but frequently concerning the juſtice or injuſtice of his actions. In every criminal trial, the firſt object of the priſoner is, to diſprove the facts alleged, and deny the actions imputed to him: The ſecond, to prove, that, even if theſe actions were real, they might be juſtified, as innocent and lawful. It is confeſſedly by deductions of the underſtanding that the firſt point is aſcertained: How can we ſuppoſe that a different faculty of the mind is employed in fixing the other?

On the other hand, thoſe who would reſolve all moral determinations into Sentiment, may endeavour to ſhow, that it is impoſſible for reaſon ever to draw concluſions of this nature. To virtue, ſay they, it belongs to be amiable, and vice odious. This forms their very nature or eſſence. But, can reaſon or argumentation diſtribute theſe different epithets to any ſubjects, and pronounce, beforehand, that this muſt produce love, and that hatred? Or, what other reaſon can we ever aſſign for theſe affections, but the original fabric and formation of the human mind, which is naturally adapted to receive them?

The end of all moral ſpeculations is to teach us our duty; and, by proper repreſentations of the deformity of vice, and beauty of virtue, beget correſpondent habits, and engage us to avoid the one, and embrace the other. But is this ever to be expected from inferences and concluſions of the underſtanding, which of themſelves have no hold of the affections, or ſet in motion the active powers of men? They diſcover truths:

But where the truths which they diſcover are indifferent, and beget no deſire or averſion, they can have no influence on conduct and behaviour. What is honourable, what is fair, what is becoming, what is noble, what is generous, takes poſſeſſion of the heart, and animates us to embrace and maintain it. What is intelligible, what is evident, what is probable, what is true, procures only the cool aſſent of the underſtanding; and gratifying a ſpeculative curioſity, puts an end to our reſearches.

Extinguiſh all the warm feelings and prepoſſeſſions in favour of virtue, and all diſguſt or averſion to vice; render men totally indifferent towards theſe diſtinctions; and morality is no longer a practical ſtudy, nor has any tendency to regulate our lives and actions.

Theſe arguments on each ſide (and many more might be produced) are ſo plauſible, that I am apt to ſuſpect, they may, the one as well as the other, be ſolid and ſatisfactory, and that Reaſon and Sentiment concur in almoſt all moral determinations and concluſions. The final ſentence, it is probable, which pronounces characters and actions amiable or odious, praiſeworthy or blameable; that which ſtamps on them the mark of honour or infamy, approbation or cenſure; that which renders morality an active principle, and conſtitutes virtue our happineſs, and vice our miſery: It is probable, I ſay, that this final ſentence depends on ſome internal ſenſe or feeling, which nature has made univerſal in the whole ſpecies. For what elſe can have an influence of this nature? But in order to pave the way for ſuch a ſentiment, and give a proper diſcernment of its object, it is often neceſſary, we find, that much reaſoning ſhould precede, that nice diſtinctions be made, juſt concluſions drawn, diſtant compariſons formed,

formed, complicated relations examined, and general facts fixed and aſcertained. Some ſpecies of beauty, eſpecially the natural kinds, on their firſt appearance, command our affection and approbation; and where they fail of this effect, it is impoſſible for any reaſoning to redreſs their influence, or adapt them better to our taſte and ſentiment. But in many orders of beauty, particularly thoſe of the finer arts, it is requiſite to employ much reaſoning, in order to feel the proper ſentiment; and a falſe reliſh may frequently be corrected by argument and reflection. There are juſt grounds to conclude that moral beauty partakes much of this latter ſpecies, and demands the aſſiſtance of our intellectual faculties, in order to give it a ſuitable influence on the human mind.

But though this queſtion, concerning the general principles of morals, be curious and important, it is needleſs for us, at preſent, to employ farther care in our reſearches concerning it. For if we can be ſo happy, in the courſe of this inquiry, as to diſcover the true origin of morals, it will then eaſily appear how far either ſentiment or reaſon enters into all determinations of this nature *. In order to attain this purpoſe, we ſhall endeavour to follow a very ſimple method: We ſhall analyze that complication of mental qualities, which forms what, in common life, we call Perſonal Merit: We ſhall conſider every attribute of the mind, which renders a man an object either of eſteem and affection, or of hatred and contempt; every habit, or ſentiment, or faculty, which, if aſcribed to any perſon, implies either praiſe or blame, and may enter into any panegyric or ſatire of his character and manners. The quick ſenſibility, which, on this head, is ſo univerſal

* See Appendix I.

among mankind, gives a philoſopher ſufficient aſſurance, that he can never be conſiderably miſtaken in framing the catalogue, or incur any danger of miſplacing the objects of his contemplation: He needs only enter into his breaſt for a moment, and conſider whether or not he ſhould deſire to have this or that quality aſcribed to him, and whether ſuch or ſuch an imputation would proceed from a friend or an enemy. The very nature of language guides us almoſt infallibly in forming a judgment of this nature; and as every tongue poſſeſſes one ſet of words which are taken in a good ſenſe, and another in the oppoſite, the leaſt acquaintance with the idiom ſuffices, without any reaſoning, to direct us in collecting and arranging the eſtimable or blameable qualities of men. The only object of reaſoning is to diſcover the circumſtances on both ſides, which are common to theſe qualities; to obſerve that particular in which the eſtimable qualities agree, on the one hand, and the blameable on the other; and thence to reach the foundation of ethics, and find thoſe univerſal principles, from which all cenſure or approbation is ultimately derived. As this is a queſtion of fact, not of abſtract ſcience, we can only expect ſucceſs, by following the experimental method, and deducing general maxims from a compariſon of particular inſtances. The other ſcientifical method, where a general abſtract principle is firſt eſtabliſhed, and is afterwards branched out into a variety of inferences and concluſions, may be more perfect in itſelf, but ſuits leſs the imperfection of human nature, and is a common ſource of illuſion and miſtake in this, as well as in other ſubjects. Men are now cured of their paſſion for hypotheſes and ſyſtems in natural philoſophy, and will hearken to no arguments but thoſe which are derived from

from experience. It is full time they ſhould attempt a like reformation in all moral diſquiſitions; and reject every ſyſtem of ethics, however ſubtile or ingenious, which is not founded on fact and obſervation.

We ſhall begin our inquiry on this head by the conſideration of the ſocial virtues, Benevolence and Juſtice. The explication of them will probably give us an opening, by which the others may be accounted for.

SECTION II.

Of Benevolence.

PART I.

IT may be eſteemed, perhaps, a ſuperfluous taſk to prove, that the benevolent or ſofter affections are ESTIMABLE; and, wherever they appear, engage the approbation and good-will of mankind. The epithets ſociable, good-natured, humane, merciful, grateful, friendly, generous, beneficent, or their equivalents, are known in all languages, and univerſally expreſs the higheſt merit which human nature is capable of attaining. Where theſe amiable qualities are attended with birth and power, and eminent abilities, and diſplay themſelves in the good government or uſeful inſtruction of mankind, they ſeem even to raiſe the poſſeſſors of them above the rank of human nature, and make them approach in ſome meaſure to the divine. Exalted capacity, undaunted courage, proſperous ſucceſs;

theſe may only expoſe a hero or politician to the envy and ill-will of the public: But as ſoon as the praiſes are added of humane and beneficent; when inſtances are diſplayed of lenity, tenderneſs, or friendſhip; envy itſelf is ſilent, or joins the general voice of approbation and applauſe.

When Pericles, the great Athenian ſtateſman and general, was on his death-bed, his ſurrounding friends, deeming him now inſenſible, began to indulge their ſorrow for their expiring patron, by enumerating his great qualities and ſucceſſes, his conqueſts and victories, the unuſual length of his adminiſtration, and his nine trophies erected over the enemies of the republic. "You forget," cries the dying hero, who had heard all, "you forget the moſt eminent of my praiſes, while you dwell ſo much on thoſe vulgar advantages, in which fortune had a principal ſhare. You have not obſerved, that no citizen has ever yet worn mourning on my account *."

In men of more ordinary talents and capacity, the ſocial virtues become, if poſſible, ſtill more eſſentially requiſite; there being nothing eminent, in that caſe, to compenſate for the want of them, or preſerve the perſon from our ſevereſt hatred, as well as contempt. A high ambition, an elevated courage, is apt, ſays Cicero, in leſs perfect characters, to degenerate into a turbulent ferocity. The more ſocial and ſofter virtues are there chiefly to be regarded. Theſe are always good and amiable †.

The principal advantage which Juvenal diſcovers in the extenſive capacity of the human ſpecies is, that it renders our benevolence alſo more extenſive, and gives us

* Plut. in Pericle. † Cic. de Officiis, lib. 1.

us larger opportunities of ſpreading our kindly influence, than what are indulged to the inferior creation *. It muſt, indeed, be confeſſed, that by doing good only, can a man truly enjoy the advantages of being eminent. His exalted ſtation, of itſelf, but the more expoſes him to danger and tempeſt. His ſole prerogative is to afford ſhelter to inferiors, who repoſe themſelves under his cover and protection.

But I forget, that it is not my preſent buſineſs to recommend generoſity and benevolence, or to paint, in their true colours, all the genuine charms of the ſocial virtues. Theſe, indeed, ſufficiently engage every heart, on the firſt apprehenſion of them; and it is difficult to abſtain from ſome ſally of panegyric, as often as they occur in diſcourſe or reaſoning. But our object here being more the ſpeculative than the practical part of morals, it will ſuffice to remark (what will readily, I believe, be allowed), that no qualities are more entitled to the general good-will and approbation of mankind than beneficence and humanity, friendſhip and gratitude, natural affection and public ſpirit, or whatever proceeds from a tender ſympathy with others, and a generous concern for our kind and ſpecies. Theſe, wherever they appear, ſeem to transfuſe themſelves, in a manner, into each beholder, and call forth, in their own behalf, the ſame favourable and affectionate ſentiments which they exert on all around.

PART II.

We may obſerve, that, in diſplaying the praiſes of any humane, beneficent man, there is one circumſtance which never fails to be amply inſiſted on, namely, the

* Sat. xv. 139. & ſeq.

happineſs and ſatisfaction derived to ſociety from his intercourſe and good offices. To his parents, we are apt to ſay, he endears himſelf by his pious attachment and duteous care, ſtill more than by the connections of nature. His children never feel his authority, but when employed for their advantage. With him, the ties of love are conſolidated by beneficence and friendſhip. The ties of friendſhip approach, in a fond obſervance of each obliging office, to thoſe of love and inclination. His domeſtics and dependents have in him a ſure reſource; and no longer dread the power of fortune, but ſo far as ſhe exerciſes it over him. From him the hungry receive food, the naked clothing, the ignorant and ſlothful ſkill and induſtry. Like the ſun, an inferior miniſter of Providence, he cheers, invigorates, and ſuſtains the ſurrounding world.

If confined to private life, the ſphere of his activity is narrower; but his influence is all benign and gentle. If exalted into a higher ſtation, mankind and poſterity reap the fruit of his labours.

As theſe topics of praiſe never fail to be employed, and with ſucceſs, where we would inſpire eſteem for any one; may it not thence be concluded, that the UTILITY, reſulting from the ſocial virtues, forms, at leaſt, a part of their merit, and is one ſource of that approbation and regard ſo univerſally paid to them?

When we recommend even an animal or a plant as uſeful and beneficial, we give it an applauſe and recommendation ſuited to its nature; as, on the other hand, reflection on the baneful influence of any of theſe inferior beings always inſpires us with the ſentiment of averſion. The eye is pleaſed with the proſpect of corn-fields and loaded vineyards; horſes grazing, and flocks paſturing: But flies the view of briars

briars and brambles, affording ſhelter to wolves and ſerpents.

A machine, a piece of furniture, a veſtment, a houſe well contrived for uſe and conveniency, is ſo far beautiful, and is contemplated with pleaſure and approbation. An experienced eye is here ſenſible to many excellencies, which eſcape perſons ignorant and uninſtructed.

Can any thing ſtronger be ſaid in praiſe of a profeſſion, ſuch as merchandize or manufacture, than to obſerve the advantages which it procures to ſociety? And is not a monk and inquiſitor enraged when we treat his order as uſeleſs or pernicious to mankind?

The hiſtorian exults in diſplaying the benefit ariſing from his labours. The writer of romance alleviates or denies the bad conſequences aſcribed to his manner of compoſition.

In general, what praiſe is implied in the ſimple epithet Uſeful! What reproach in the contrary!

Your Gods, ſays Cicero *, in oppoſition to the Epicureans, cannot juſtly claim any worſhip or adoration, with whatever imaginary perfections you may ſuppoſe them endowed. They are totally uſeleſs and inactive. Even the Egyptians, whom you ſo much ridicule, never conſecrated any animal but on account of its utility.

The ſceptics aſſert †, though abſurdly, that the origin of all religious worſhip was derived from the utility of inanimate objects, as the ſun and moon, to the ſupport and well-being of mankind. This is alſo the common reaſon aſſigned by hiſtorians for the deification of eminent heroes and legiſlators ‡.

To

* De Nat. Deor. lib. i.

† Sext. Emp. adverſus Math. lib. viii.

‡ Diod. Sic. paſſim.

To plant a tree, to cultivate a field, to beget children; meritorious acts, according to the religion of Zoroaſter.

In all determinations of morality, this circumſtance of public utility is ever principally in view; and wherever diſputes ariſe, either in philoſophy or common life, concerning the bounds of duty, the queſtion cannot, by any means, be decided with greater certainty, than by aſcertaining, on any ſide, the true intereſts of mankind. If any falſe opinion, embraced from appearances, has been found to prevail; as ſoon as farther experience and ſounder reaſoning have given us juſter notions of human affairs, we retract our firſt ſentiment, and adjuſt anew the boundaries of moral good and evil.

Giving alms to common beggars is naturally praiſed; becauſe it ſeems to carry relief to the diſtreſſed and indigent: But when we obſerve the encouragement thence ariſing to idleneſs and debauchery, we regard that ſpecies of charity rather as a weakneſs than a virtue.

Tyrannicide, or the aſſaſſination of uſurpers and oppreſſive princes, was highly extolled in ancient times; becauſe it both freed mankind from many of theſe monſters, and ſeemed to keep the others in awe, whom the ſword or poniard could not reach. But hiſtory and experience having ſince convinced us, that this practice increaſes the jealouſy and cruelty of princes, a Timoleon and a Brutus, though treated with indulgence on account of the prejudices of their times, are now conſidered as very improper models for imitation.

Liberality in princes is regarded as a mark of beneficence: But when it occurs, that the homely bread

of

of the honeſt and induſtrious is often thereby converted into delicious cates for the idle and the prodigal, we ſoon retract our heedleſs praiſes. The regrets of a prince, for having loſt a day, were noble and generous: But had he intended to have ſpent it in acts of generoſity to his greedy courtiers, it was better loſt than miſemployed after that manner.

Luxury, or a refinement on the pleaſures and conveniences of life, had long been ſuppoſed the ſource of every corruption in government, and the immediate cauſe of faction, ſedition, civil wars, and the total loſs of liberty. It was, therefore, univerſally regarded as a vice, and was an object of declamation to all ſatiriſts and ſevere moraliſts. Thoſe who prove, or attempt to prove, that ſuch refinements rather tend to the increaſe of induſtry, civility, and arts, regulate anew our Moral as well as Political ſentiments, and repreſent, as laudable and innocent, what had formerly been regarded as pernicious and blameable.

Upon the whole, then, it ſeems undeniable, that nothing can beſtow more merit on any human creature than the ſentiment of benevolence in an eminent degree; and that a part, at leaſt, of its merit ariſes from its tendency to promote the intereſts of our ſpecies, and beſtow happineſs on human ſociety. We carry our view into the ſalutary conſequences of ſuch a character and diſpoſition; and whatever has ſo benign an influence, and forwards ſo deſirable an end, is beheld with complacency and pleaſure. The ſocial virtues are never regarded without their beneficial tendencies, nor viewed as barren and unfruitful. The happineſs of mankind, the order of ſociety, the harmony of families, the mutual ſupport of friends, are always

always conſidered as the reſult of their gentle dominion over the breaſts of men.

How conſiderable a part of their merit we ought to aſcribe to their utility, will better appear from future diſquiſitions *, as well as the reaſon why this circumſtance has ſuch a command over our eſteem and approbation †.

SECTION III.

Of Juſtice.

PART I.

THAT Juſtice is uſeful to ſociety, and conſequently, that part of its merit, at leaſt, muſt ariſe from that conſideration, it would be a ſuperfluous undertaking to prove. That public utility is the ſole origin of juſtice, and that reflections on the beneficial conſequences of this virtue are the ſole foundation of its merit; this propoſition, being more curious and important, will better deſerve our examination and inquiry.

Let us ſuppoſe, that nature has beſtowed on the human race ſuch profuſe abundance of all external conveniencies, that, without any uncertainty in the event, without any care or induſtry on our part, every individual finds himſelf fully provided with whatever his moſt voracious appetites can want, or luxurious imagination wiſh or deſire. His natural beauty, we ſhall

* Sect. 3d and 4th. † Sect. 5th.

ſhall ſuppoſe, ſurpaſſes all acquired ornaments: The perpetual clemency of the ſeaſons renders uſeleſs all clothes or covering: The raw herbage affords him the moſt delicious fare; the clear fountain, the richeſt beverage. No laborious occupation required: No tillage: No navigation. Muſic, poetry, and contemplation, form his ſole buſineſs: Converſation, mirth and friendſhip, his ſole amuſement.

It ſeems evident, that, in ſuch a happy ſtate, every other ſocial virtue would flouriſh, and receive tenfold increaſe; but the cautious, jealous virtue of Juſtice would never once have been dreamed of. For what purpoſe make a partition of goods, where every one has already more than enough? Why give riſe to property, where there cannot poſſibly be any injury? Why call this object mine, when, upon the ſeizing of it by another, I need but ſtretch out my hand to poſſeſs myſelf of what is equally valuable? Juſtice, in that caſe, being totally USELESS, would be an idle ceremonial, and could never poſſibly have place in the catalogue of virtues.

We ſee, even in the preſent neceſſitous condition of mankind, that, wherever any benefit is beſtowed by nature in an unlimited abundance, we leave it always in common among the whole human race, and make no ſubdiviſions of right and property. Water and air, though the moſt neceſſary of all objects, are not challenged as the property of individuals; nor can any man commit injuſtice by the moſt laviſh uſe and enjoyment of theſe bleſſings. In fertile extenſive countries, with few inhabitants, land is regarded on the ſame footing: And no topic is ſo much inſiſted on by thoſe, who defend the liberty of the ſeas, as the unexhauſted uſe of them in navigation. Were the advantages, procured

cured by navigation, as inexhauſtible, theſe reaſoners had never had any adverſaries to refute; nor had any claims ever been advanced of a ſeparate, excluſive dominion over the ocean.

It may happen, in ſome countries, at ſome periods, that there be eſtabliſhed a property in water, none in land *; if the latter be in greater abundance than can be uſed by the inhabitants, and the former be found with difficulty, and in very ſmall quantities.

Again; ſuppoſe, that, though the neceſſities of the human race continue the ſame as at preſent, yet the mind is ſo enlarged, and ſo replete with friendſhip and generoſity, that every man has the utmoſt tenderneſs for every man, and feels no more concern for his own intereſt than for that of his fellows: It ſeems evident, that the USE of juſtice would, in this caſe, be ſuſpended by ſuch an extenſive benevolence, nor would the diviſions and barriers of property and obligation have ever been thought of. Why ſhould I bind another, by a deed or promiſe, to do me any good office, when I know that he is already prompted by the ſtrongeſt inclination to ſeek my happineſs, and would, of himſelf, perform the deſired ſervice; except the hurt, he thereby receives, be greater than the benefit accruing to me? in which caſe, he knows, that, from my innate humanity and friendſhip, I ſhould be the firſt to oppoſe myſelf to his imprudent generoſity. Why raiſe land-marks between my neighbour's field and mine, when my heart has made no diviſion between our intereſts; but ſhares all his joys and ſorrows with the ſame force and vivacity as if originally my own? Every man, upon this ſuppoſition, being a ſecond ſelf to another, would truſt all his intereſts to the diſcre-

tion

* Geneſis, chap. xiii. and xxi.

tion of every man; without jealouſy, without partition, without diſtinction: And the whole human race would form only one family; where all would lie in common, and be uſed freely without regard to property; but cautiouſly too, with as entire regard to the neceſſities of each individual as if our own intereſts were moſt intimately concerned.

In the preſent diſpoſition of the human heart, it would, perhaps, be difficult to find complete inſtances of ſuch enlarged affections; but ſtill we may obſerve, that the caſe of families approaches towards it; and the ſtronger the mutual benevolence is among the individuals, the nearer it approaches; till all diſtinction of property be, in a great meaſure, loſt and confounded among them. Between married perſons, the cement of friendſhip is by the laws ſuppoſed ſo ſtrong as to aboliſh all diviſion of poſſeſſions, and has often, in reality, the force aſcribed to it. And it is obſervable, that, during the ardour of new enthuſiaſms, when every principle is inflamed into extravagance, the community of goods has frequently been attempted; and nothing but experience of its inconveniences, from the returning or diſguiſed ſelfiſhneſs of men, could make the imprudent fanatics adopt anew the ideas of juſtice and of ſeparate property. So true is it that this virtue derives its exiſtence entirely from its neceſſary Uſe to the intercourſe and ſocial ſtate of mankind.

To make this truth more evident, let us reverſe the foregoing ſuppoſitions; and, carrying every thing to the oppoſite extreme, conſider what would be the effect of theſe new ſituations. Suppoſe a ſociety to fall into ſuch want of all common neceſſaries, that the utmoſt frugality and induſtry cannot preſerve the greater

number

number from periſhing, and the whole from extreme miſery: It will readily, I believe, be admitted, that the ſtrict laws of juſtice are ſuſpended in ſuch a preſſing emergence, and give place to the ſtronger motives of neceſſity and ſelf-preſervation. Is it any crime, after a ſhipwreck, to ſeize whatever means or inſtrument of ſafety one can lay hold of, without regard to former limitations of property? Or if a city beſieged were periſhing with hunger; can we imagine, that men will ſee any means of preſervation before them, and loſe their lives from a ſcrupulous regard to what, in other ſituations, would be the rules of equity and juſtice? The USE and TENDENCY of that virtue is to procure happineſs and ſecurity, by preſerving order in ſociety: But where the ſociety is ready to periſh from extreme neceſſity, no greater evil can be dreaded from violence and injuſtice; and every man may now provide for himſelf by all the means which prudence can dictate, or humanity permit. The public, even in leſs urgent neceſſities, opens granaries without the conſent of proprietors; as juſtly ſuppoſing, that the authority of magiſtracy may, conſiſtent with equity, extend ſo far: But were any number of men to aſſemble, without the tie of laws or civil juriſdiction; would an equal partition of bread in a famine, though effected by power and even violence, be regarded as criminal or injurious?

Suppoſe likewiſe, that it ſhould be a virtuous man's fate to fall into the ſociety of ruffians, remote from the protection of laws and government; what conduct muſt he embrace in that melancholy ſituation? He ſees ſuch a deſperate rapaciouſneſs prevail, ſuch a diſregard to equity; ſuch contempt of order; ſuch ſtupid blindneſs to future conſequences, as muſt immediately

ately have the moſt tragical concluſion, and muſt terminate in deſtruction to the greater number, and in a total diſſolution of ſociety to the reſt. He, meanwhile, can have no other expedient than to arm himſelf, to whomever the ſword he ſeizes, or the buckler, may belong: To make proviſion of all means of defence and ſecurity: And his particular regard to juſtice being no longer of USE to his own ſafety or that of others, he muſt conſult the dictates of ſelf-preſervation alone, without concern for thoſe who no longer merit his care and attention.

When any man, even in political ſociety, renders himſelf, by his crimes, obnoxious to the public, he is puniſhed by the laws in his goods and perſon; that is, the ordinary rules of juſtice are, with regard to him, ſuſpended for a moment, and it becomes equitable to inflict on him, for the benefit of ſociety, what, otherwiſe, he could not ſuffer without wrong or injury.

The rage and violence of public war; what is it but a ſuſpenſion of juſtice among the warring parties, who perceive, that this virtue is now no longer of any uſe or advantage to them? The laws of war, which then ſucceed to thoſe of equity and juſtice, are rules calculated for the advantage and utility of that particular ſtate in which men are now placed. And were a civilized nation engaged with barbarians who obſerved no rules even of war; the former muſt alſo ſuſpend their obſervance of them, where they no longer ſerve to any purpoſe; and muſt render every action or rencounter as bloody and pernicious as poſſible to the firſt aggreſſors.

Thus the rules of equity or juſtice depend entirely on the particular ſtate and condition in which men are placed, and owe their origin and exiſtence to that

UTILITY which reſults to the public from their ſtrict and regular obſervance. Reverſe, in any conſiderable circumſtance, the condition of men: Produce extreme abundance or extreme neceſſity: Implant in the human breaſt perfect moderation and humanity, or perfect rapaciouſneſs and malice: By rendering juſtice totally uſeleſs, you thereby totally deſtroy its eſſence, and ſuſpend its obligation upon mankind.

The common ſituation of ſociety is a medium amidſt all theſe extremes. We are naturally partial to ourſelves and to our friends; but are capable of learning the advantage reſulting from a more equitable conduct. Few enjoyments are given us from the open and liberal hand of nature; but by art, labour, and induſtry, we can extract them in great abundance. Hence the ideas of property become neceſſary in all civil ſociety: Hence juſtice derives its uſefulneſs to the public: And hence alone ariſes its merit and moral obligation.

Theſe concluſions are ſo natural and obvious, that they have not eſcaped even the poets, in their deſcriptions of the felicity attending the golden age, or the reign of Saturn. The ſeaſons, in that firſt period of nature, were ſo temperate, if we credit theſe agreeable fictions, that there was no neceſſity for men to provide themſelves with clothes and houſes, as a ſecurity againſt the violence of heat and cold: The rivers flowed with wine and milk: The oaks yielded honey; and nature ſpontaneouſly produced her greateſt delicacies. Nor were theſe the chief advantages of that happy age. Tempeſts were not alone removed from nature; but thoſe more furious tempeſts were unknown to human breaſts, which now cauſe ſuch uproar, and engender ſuch confuſion. Avarice, ambition, cruelty, ſelfiſhneſs,

ſelfiſhneſs, were never heard of: Cordial affection, compaſſion, ſympathy, were the only movements with which the mind was yet acquainted. Even the punctilious diſtinction of mine and thine was baniſhed from among that happy race of mortals, and carried with it the very notion of property and obligation, juſtice and injuſtice.

This poetical fiction of the golden age is, in ſome reſpects, of a piece with the philoſophical fiction of the ſtate of nature; only that the former is repreſented as the moſt charming and moſt peaceable condition which can poſſibly be imagined; whereas the latter is painted out as a ſtate of mutual war and violence, attended with the moſt extreme neceſſity. On the firſt origin of mankind, we are told, their ignorance and ſavage nature were ſo prevalent, that they could give no mutual truſt, but muſt each depend upon himſelf, and his own force or cunning, for protection and ſecurity. No law was heard of: No rule of juſtice known: No diſtinction of property regarded: Power was the only meaſure of right; and a perpetual war of all againſt all was the reſult of mens untamed ſelfiſhneſs and barbarity *.

Whether ſuch a condition of human nature could ever exiſt, or, if it did, could continue ſo long as to merit the appellation of a ſtate, may juſtly be doubted. Men are neceſſarily born in a family-ſociety, at leaſt; and are trained up by their parents to ſome rule of conduct and behaviour. But this muſt be admitted, that, if ſuch a ſtate of mutual war and violence was ever real, the ſuſpenſion of all laws of juſtice, from their abſolute

* See NOTE [S.]

abſolute inutility, is a neceſſary and infallible conſequence.

The more we vary our views of human life, and the newer and more unuſual the lights are in which we ſurvey it, the more ſhall we be convinced, that the origin here aſſigned for the virtue of juſtice is real and ſatisfactory.

Were there a ſpecies of creatures intermingled with men, which, though rational, were poſſeſſed of ſuch inferior ſtrength, both of body and mind, that they were incapable of all reſiſtance, and could never, upon the higheſt provocation, make us feel the effects of their reſentment; the neceſſary conſequence, I think, is, that we ſhould be bound, by the laws of humanity, to give gentle uſage to theſe creatures, but ſhould not, properly ſpeaking, lie under any reſtraint of juſtice with regard to them, nor could they poſſeſs any right or property excluſive of ſuch arbitrary lords. Our intercourſe with them could not be called ſociety, which ſuppoſes a degree of equality; but abſolute command on the one ſide, and ſervile obedience on the other. Whatever we covet, they muſt inſtantly reſign: Our permiſſion is the only tenure, by which they hold their poſſeſſions: Our compaſſion and kindneſs the only check by which they curb our lawleſs will: And as no inconvenience ever reſults from the exerciſe of a power, ſo firmly eſtabliſhed in nature, the reſtraints of juſtice and property being totally uſeleſs, would never have place in ſo unequal a confederacy.

This is plainly the ſituation of men with regard to animals; and how far theſe may be ſaid to poſſeſs reaſon, I leave it to others to determine. The great ſuperiority of civilized Europeans above barbarous Indians, tempted us to imagine ourſelves on the ſame footing

with

with regard to them, and made us throw off all reſtraints of juſtice, and even of humanity, in our treatment of them. In many nations, the female ſex are reduced to like ſlavery, and are rendered incapable of all property, in oppoſition to their lordly maſters. But though the males, when united, have, in all countries, bodily force ſufficient to maintain this ſevere tyranny; yet ſuch are the inſinuation, addreſs, and charms of their fair companions, that women are commonly able to break the confederacy, and ſhare with the other ſex all the rights and privileges of ſociety.

Were the human ſpecies ſo framed by nature as that each individual poſſeſſed within himſelf every faculty, requiſite both for his own preſervation and for the propagation of his kind: Were all ſociety and intercourſe cut off between man and man, by the primary intention of the ſupreme Creator: It ſeems evident, that ſo ſolitary a being would be as much incapable of juſtice, as of ſocial diſcourſe and converſation. Where mutual regards and forbearance ſerve to no manner of purpoſe, they would never direct the conduct of any reaſonable man. The headlong courſe of the paſſions would be checked by no reflection on future conſequences. And as each man is here ſuppoſed to love himſelf alone, and to depend only on himſelf and his own activity for ſafety and happineſs, he would, on every occaſion, to the utmoſt of his power, challenge the preference above every other being, to none of which he is bound by any ties, either of nature or of intereſt.

But ſuppoſe the conjunction of the ſexes to be eſtabliſhed in nature, a family immediately ariſes; and particular rules being found requiſite for its ſubſiſtence, theſe are immediately embraced; though without com-

prehending the reſt of mankind within their preſcriptions. Suppoſe, that ſeveral families unite together into one ſociety, which is totally disjoined from all others, the rules, which preſerve peace and order, enlarge themſelves to the utmoſt extent of that ſociety; but becoming then entirely uſeleſs, loſe their force when carried one ſtep farther. But again ſuppoſe, that ſeveral diſtinct ſocieties maintain a kind of intercourſe for mutual convenience and advantage, the boundaries of juſtice ſtill grow larger, in proportion to the largeneſs of mens views, and the force of their mutual connections. Hiſtory, experience, reaſon, ſufficiently inſtruct us in this natural progreſs of human ſentiments, and in the gradual enlargement of our regards to juſtice, in proportion as we become acquainted with the extenſive utility of that virtue.

PART II.

IF we examine the particular laws by which juſtice is directed, and property determined, we ſhall ſtill be preſented with the ſame concluſion. The good of mankind is the only object of all theſe laws and regulations. Not only is it requiſite, for the peace and intereſt of ſociety, that mens poſſeſſions ſhould be ſeparated; but the rules, which we follow, in making the ſeparation, are ſuch as can beſt be contrived to ſerve farther the intereſts of ſociety.

We ſhall ſuppoſe, that a creature poſſeſſed of reaſon, but unacquainted with human nature, deliberates with himſelf what RULES of juſtice or property would beſt promote public intereſt, and eſtabliſh peace and ſecurity among mankind: His moſt obvious thought would be, to aſſign the largeſt poſſeſſions to the moſt extenſive

ſive virtue, and give every one the power of doing good, proportioned to his inclination. In a perfect theocracy, where a being infinitely intelligent governs by particular volitions, this rule would certainly have place, and might ſerve to the wiſeſt purpoſes: But were mankind to execute ſuch a law; ſo great is the uncertainty of merit, both from its natural obſcurity, and from the ſelf-conceit of each individual, that no determinate rule of conduct would ever reſult from it; and the total diſſolution of ſociety muſt be the immediate conſequence. Fanatics may ſuppoſe, "that dominion is founded on grace," and "that ſaints alone inherit the earth;" but the civil magiſtrate very juſtly puts theſe ſublime theoriſts on the ſame footing with common robbers, and teaches them by the ſevereſt diſcipline, that a rule, which, in ſpeculation, may ſeem the moſt advantageous to ſociety, may yet be found in practice totally pernicious and deſtructive.

That there were religious fanatics of this kind in England during the civil wars, we learn from hiſtory; though it is probable, that the obvious tendency of theſe principles excited ſuch horror in mankind, as ſoon obliged the dangerous enthuſiaſts to renounce, or at leaſt conceal their tenets. Perhaps the Levellers, who claimed an equal diſtribution of property, were a kind of political fanatics which aroſe from the religious ſpecies, and more openly avowed their pretenſions, as carrying a more plauſible appearance of being practicable in themſelves, as well as uſeful to human ſociety.

It muſt indeed be confeſſed, that nature is ſo liberal to mankind, that, were all her preſents equally divided among the ſpecies, and improved by art and induſtry, every individual would enjoy all the neceſſaries,

and even moſt of the comforts of life; nor would ever be liable to any ills, but ſuch as might accidentally ariſe from the ſickly frame and conſtitution of his body. It muſt alſo be confeſſed, that, wherever we depart from this equality, we rob the poor of more ſatisfaction than we add to the rich, and that the ſlight gratification of a frivolous vanity, in one individual, frequently coſts more than bread to many families, and even provinces. It may appear withal, that the rule of equality, as it would be highly uſeful, is not altogether impracticable; but has taken place, at leaſt in an imperfect degree, in ſome republics; particularly that of Sparta, where it was attended, it is ſaid, with the moſt beneficial conſequences. Not to mention, that the Agrarian laws, ſo frequently claimed in Rome, and carried into execution in many Greek cities, proceeded all of them from a general idea of the utility of this principle.

But hiſtorians, and even common ſenſe, may inform us, that however ſpecious theſe ideas of perfect equality may ſeem, they are really at bottom impracticable; and were they not ſo, would be extremely pernicious to human ſociety. Render poſſeſſions ever ſo equal, mens different degrees of art, care, and induſtry, will immediately break that equality: Or if you check theſe virtues, you reduce ſociety to the moſt extreme indigence; and inſtead of preventing want and beggary in a few, render it unavoidable to the whole community. The moſt rigorous inquiſition too is requiſite to watch every inequality on its firſt appearance; and the moſt ſevere juriſdiction, to puniſh and redreſs it. But beſides that ſo much authority muſt ſoon degenerate into tyranny, and be exerted with great partialities; who can poſſibly be poſſeſſed of it, in ſuch a ſituation

ſituation as is here ſuppoſed? Perfect equality of poſſeſſions, deſtroying all ſubordination, weakens extremely the authority of magiſtracy, and muſt reduce all power nearly to a level, as well as property.

We may conclude therefore, that in order to eſtabliſh laws for the regulation of property, we muſt be acquainted with the nature and ſituation of man; muſt reject appearances which may be falſe, though ſpecious; and muſt ſearch for thoſe rules which are, on the whole, moſt uſeful and beneficial. Vulgar ſenſe and ſlight experience are ſufficient for this purpoſe, where men give not way to too ſelfiſh avidity, or too extenſive enthuſiaſm.

Who ſees not, for inſtance, that whatever is produced or improved by a man's art or induſtry, ought for ever to be ſecured to him, in order to give encouragement to ſuch uſeful habits and accompliſhments? That the property ought alſo to deſcend to children and relations, for the ſame uſeful purpoſe? That it may be alienated by conſent, in order to beget that commerce and intercourſe which is ſo beneficial to human ſociety? And that all contracts and promiſes ought carefully to be fulfilled, in order to ſecure mutual truſt and confidence, by which the general intereſt of mankind is ſo much promoted?

Examine the writers on the laws of nature; and you will always find, that whatever principles they ſet out with, they are ſure to terminate here at laſt, and to aſſign, as the ultimate reaſon for every rule which they eſtabliſh, the convenience and neceſſities of mankind. A conceſſion thus extorted, in oppoſition to ſyſtems, has more authority than if it had been made in proſecution of them.

What

What other reaſon, indeed, could writers ever give, why this muſt be mine and that yours; ſince uninſtructed nature ſurely never made any ſuch diſtinction? The objects, which receive thoſe appellations, are, of themſelves, foreign to us; they are totally disjoined and ſeparated from us; and nothing but the general intereſts of ſociety can form the connection.

Sometimes the intereſts of ſociety may require a rule of juſtice in a particular caſe; but may not determine any particular rule, among ſeveral, which are all equally beneficial. In that caſe, the ſlighteſt analogies are laid hold of, in order to prevent that indifference and ambiguity, which would be the ſource of perpetual diſſenſion. Thus, poſſeſſion alone, and firſt poſſeſſion, is ſuppoſed to convey property, where nobody elſe has any preceding claim and pretenſion. Many of the reaſonings of lawyers are of this analogical nature, and depend on very ſlight connections of the imagination.

Does any one ſcruple, in extraordinary caſes, to violate all regard to the private property of individuals, and ſacrifice to public intereſt a diſtinction which had been eſtabliſhed for the ſake of that intereſt? The ſafety of the people is the ſupreme law: All other particular laws are ſubordinate to it, and dependent on it: And if, in the common courſe of things, they be followed and regarded, it is only becauſe the public ſafety and intereſt commonly demand ſo equal and impartial an adminiſtration.

Sometimes both utility and analogy fail, and leave the laws of juſtice in total uncertainty. Thus, it is highly requiſite, that preſcription or long poſſeſſion ſhould convey property; but what number of days, or months, or years, ſhould be ſufficient for that purpoſe,

poſe, it is impoſſible for reaſon alone to determine. Civil laws here ſupply the place of the natural code, and aſſign different terms for preſcription, according to the different utilities propoſed by the legiſlature. Bills of exchange and promiſſory notes, by the laws of moſt countries, preſcribe ſooner than bonds, and mortgages, and contracts of a more formal nature.

In general, we may obſerve, that all queſtions of property are ſubordinate to the authority of civil laws, which extend, reſtrain, modify, and alter, the rules of natural juſtice, according to the particular convenience of each community. The laws have, or ought to have, a conſtant reference to the conſtitution of government, the manners, the climate, the religion, the commerce, the ſituation, of each ſociety. A late author of genius, as well as learning, has proſecuted this ſubject at large, and has eſtabliſhed, from theſe principles, a ſyſtem of political knowledge, which abounds in ingenious and brilliant thoughts, and is not wanting in ſolidity *.

"What is a man's property?" Any thing which it is lawful for him, and for him alone, to uſe. "But what rule have we, by which we can diſtinguiſh theſe objects?" Here we muſt have recourſe to ſtatutes, cuſtoms, precedents, analogies, and a hundred other circumſtances; ſome of which are conſtant and inflexible, ſome variable and arbitrary. But the ultimate point, in which they all profeſſedly terminate, is, the intereſt and happineſs of human ſociety. Where this enters not into conſideration, nothing can appear more whimſical, unnatural, and even ſuperſtitious, than all or moſt of the laws of juſtice and of property.

Thoſe who ridicule vulgar ſuperſtitions, and expoſe the folly of particular regards to meats, days, places, poſtures,

* See NOTE [T].

poſtures, apparel, have an eaſy taſk; while they conſider all the qualities and relations of the objects, and diſcover no adequate cauſe for that affection or antipathy, veneration or horror, which have ſo mighty an influence over a conſiderable part of mankind. A Syrian would have ſtarved rather than taſte pigeon; an Egyptian would not have approached bacon: But if theſe ſpecies of food be examined by the ſenſes of ſight, ſmell, or taſte, or ſcrutinized by the ſciences of chemiſtry, medicine, or phyſics; no difference is ever found between them and any other ſpecies, nor can that preciſe circumſtance be pitched on, which may afford a juſt foundation for the religious paſſion. A fowl on Thurſday is lawful food; on Friday abominable; eggs, in this houſe, and in this dioceſe, are permitted during Lent; a hundred paces farther, to eat them is a damnable ſin. This earth or building, yeſterday, was profane; to-day, by the muttering of certain words, it has become holy and ſacred. Such reflections as theſe, in the mouth of a philoſopher, one may ſafely ſay, are too obvious to have any influence; becauſe they muſt always, to every man, occur at firſt ſight; and where they prevail not of themſelves, they are ſurely obſtructed by education, prejudice, and paſſion, not by ignorance or miſtake.

It may appear to a careleſs view, or rather a too abſtracted reflection, that there enters a like ſuperſtition into all the ſentiments of juſtice; and that if a man expoſe its object, or what we call property, to the ſame ſcrutiny of ſenſe and ſcience, he will not, by the moſt accurate inquiry, find any foundation for the difference made by moral ſentiment. I may lawfully nouriſh myſelf from this tree; but the fruit of another of the ſame ſpecies, ten paces off, it is criminal for me to touch.

touch. Had I worn this apparel an hour ago, I had merited the ſevereſt puniſhment; but a man, by pronouncing a few magical ſyllables, has now rendered it fit for my uſe and ſervice. Were this houſe placed in the neighbouring territory, it had been immoral for me to dwell in it; but being built on this ſide the river, it is ſubject to a different municipal law, and, by its becoming mine, I incur no blame or cenſure. The ſame ſpecies of reaſoning, it may be thought, which ſo ſucceſsfully expoſes ſuperſtition, is alſo applicable to juſtice; nor is it poſſible, in the one caſe, more than in the other, to point out, in the object, that preciſe quality or circumſtance which is the foundation of the ſentiment.

But there is this material difference between ſuperſtition and juſtice, that the former is frivolous, uſeleſs, and burdenſome; the latter is abſolutely requiſite to the well-being of mankind and exiſtence of ſociety. when we abſtract from this circumſtance (for it is too apparent ever to be overlooked), it muſt be confeſſed, that all regards to right and property ſeem entirely without foundation, as much as the groſſeſt and moſt vulgar ſuperſtition. Were the intereſts of ſociety nowiſe concerned, it is as unintelligible, why another's articulating certain ſounds implying conſent, ſhould change the nature of my actions with regard to a particular object, as why the reciting of a liturgy by a prieſt, in a certain habit and poſture, ſhould dedicate a heap of brick and timber, and render it, thenceforth and for ever, ſacred *.

These reflections are far from weakening the obligations of juſtice, or diminiſhing any thing from the moſt ſacred attention to property. On the contrary, ſuch ſentiments

* See NOTE [U].

ſentiments muſt acquire new force from the preſent reaſoning. For what ſtronger foundation can be deſired or conceived for any duty, than to obſerve, that human ſociety, or even human nature, could not ſubſiſt without the eſtabliſhment of it; and will ſtill arrive at greater degrees of happineſs and perfection, the more inviolable the regard is which is paid to that duty?

The dilemma ſeems obvious: As juſtice evidently tends to promote public utility, and to ſupport civil ſociety, the ſentiment of juſtice is either derived from our reflecting on that tendency, or, like hunger, thirſt, and other appetites, reſentment, love of life, attachment to offspring, and other paſſions, ariſes from a ſimple original inſtinct in the human breaſt, which nature has implanted for like ſalutary purpoſes. If the latter be the caſe, it follows, that property, which is the object of juſtice, is alſo diſtinguiſhed by a ſimple, original inſtinct, and is not aſcertained by any argument or reflection. But who is there that ever heard of ſuch an inſtinct? Or is this a ſubject in which new diſcoveries can be made? We may as well expect to diſcover in the body new ſenſes, which had before eſcaped the obſervation of all mankind.

But farther, though it ſeems a very ſimple propoſition to ſay, that nature, by an inſtinctive ſentiment, diſtinguiſhes property, yet in reality we ſhall find, that there are required for that purpoſe ten thouſand different inſtincts, and theſe employed about objects of the greateſt intricacy and niceſt diſcernment. For when a definition of property is required, that relation is found to reſolve itſelf into any poſſeſſion acquired by occupation, by induſtry, by preſcription, by inheritance, by contract, &c. Can we think that nature, by an original

nal inſtinct, inſtructs us in all theſe methods of acquiſition?

Theſe words, too, inheritance and contract, ſtand for ideas infinitely complicated; and to define them exactly, a hundred volumes of laws, and a thouſand volumes of commentators, have not been found ſufficient. Does nature, whoſe inſtincts in men are all ſimple, embrace ſuch complicated and artificial objects, and create a rational creature, without truſting any thing to the operation of his reaſon?

But even though all this were admitted, it would not be ſatisfactory. Poſitive laws can certainly transfer property. Is it by another original inſtinct, that we recognize the authority of kings and ſenates, and mark all the boundaries of their juriſdiction? Judges too, even though their ſentence be erroneous and illegal, muſt be allowed, for the ſake of peace and order, to have deciſive authority, and ultimately to determine property. Have we original, innate ideas of prætors, and chancellors, and juries? Who ſees not, that all theſe inſtitutions ariſe merely from the neceſſities of human ſociety?

All birds of the ſame ſpecies, in every age and country, build their neſts alike: In this we ſee the force of inſtinct. Men in different times and places, frame their houſes differently: Here we perceive the influence of reaſon and cuſtom. A like inference may be drawn from comparing the inſtinct of generation and the inſtitution of property.

How great ſoever the variety of municipal laws, it muſt be confeſſed, that their chief outlines pretty regularly concur; becauſe the purpoſes to which they tend, are every where exactly ſimilar. In like manner, all houſes have a roof and walls, windows and chimneys; though

though diverſified in their ſhape, figure, and materials. The purpoſes of the latter, directed to the conveniences of human life, diſcover not more plainly their origin from reaſon and reflection, than do thoſe of the former, which point all to a like end.

I need not mention the variations which all the rules of property receive from the finer turns and connections of the imagination, and from the ſubtilties and abſtractions of law-topics and reaſonings. There is no poſſibility of reconciling this obſervation to the notion of original inſtincts.

What alone will beget a doubt concerning the theory on which I inſiſt, is the influence of education and acquired habits; by which we are ſo accuſtomed to blame injuſtice, that we are not, in every inſtance, conſcious of any immediate reflection on the pernicious conſequences of it. The views the moſt familiar to us, are apt, for that very reaſon, to eſcape us; and what we have very frequently performed from certain motives, we are apt likewiſe to continue mechanically, without recalling, on every occaſion, the reflections which firſt determined us. The convenience, or rather neceſſity, which leads to juſtice, is ſo univerſal, and every where points ſo much to the ſame rules, that the habit takes place in all ſocieties; and it is not without ſome ſcrutiny, that we are able to aſcertain its true origin. The matter, however, is not ſo obſcure, but that, even in common life, we have, every moment, recourſe to the principle of public utility, and aſk, "What muſt become of the world, if ſuch practices prevail? How could ſociety ſubſiſt under ſuch diſorders?" Were the diſtinction or ſeparation of poſſeſſions entirely uſeleſs, can any one conceive, that it ever ſhould have obtained in ſociety?

Thus

Thus we ſeem, upon the whole, to have attained a knowledge of the force of that principle here inſiſted on, and can determine what degree of eſteem or moral approbation may reſult from reflections on public intereſt and utility. The neceſſity of juſtice to the ſupport of ſociety is the SOLE foundation of that virtue; and ſince no moral excellence is more highly eſteemed, we may conclude, that this circumſtance of uſefulneſs has, in general, the ſtrongeſt energy, and moſt entire command over our ſentiments. It muſt, therefore, be the ſource of a conſiderable part of the merit aſcribed to humanity, benevolence, friendſhip, public ſpirit, and other ſocial virtues of that ſtamp; as it is the SOLE ſource of the moral approbation paid to fidelity, juſtice, veracity, integrity, and thoſe other eſtimable and uſeful qualities and principles. It is entirely agreeable to the rules of philoſophy, and even of common reaſon, where any principle has been found to have a great force and energy in one inſtance, to aſcribe it to a like energy in all ſimilar inſtances. This indeed is Newton's chief rule of philoſophizing *.

SECTION IV.

Of Political Society.

HAD every man ſufficient ſagacity to perceive, at all times, the ſtrong intereſt which binds him to the obſervance of juſtice and equity, and ſtrength of mind

* Principia, lib. iii.

mind ſufficient to perſevere in a ſteady adherence to a general and a diſtant intereſt, in oppoſition to the allurements of preſent pleaſure and advantage; there had never, in that caſe, been any ſuch thing as government or political ſociety, but each man, following his natural liberty, had lived in entire peace and harmony with all others. What need of poſitive law, where natural juſtice is, of itſelf, a ſufficient reſtraint? Why create magiſtrates, where there never ariſe any diſorder or iniquity? Why abridge our native freedom, when, in every inſtance, the utmoſt exertion of it is found innocent and beneficial? It is evident that, if government were totally uſeleſs, it never could have place, and that the SOLE foundation of the duty of ALLEGIANCE is the advantage which it procures to ſociety, by preſerving peace and order among mankind.

When a number of political ſocieties are erected, and maintain a great intercourſe together, a new ſet of rules are immediately diſcovered to be uſeful in that particular ſituation; and accordingly take place under the title of LAWS of NATIONS. Of this kind are, the ſacredneſs of the perſons of ambaſſadors, abſtaining from poiſoned arms, quarter in war, with others of that kind, which are plainly calculated for the advantage of ſtates and kingdoms, in their intercourſe with each other.

The rules of juſtice, ſuch as prevail among individuals, are not entirely ſuſpended among political ſocieties. All princes pretend a regard to the rights of other princes; and ſome, no doubt, without hypocriſy. Alliances and treaties are every day made between independent ſtates, which would only be ſo much waſte of parchment, if they were not found by experience to have ſome influence and authority. But here is the

difference

difference between kingdoms and individuals: Human nature cannot, by any means, ſubſiſt, without the aſſociation of individuals; and that aſſociation never could have place, were no regard paid to the laws of equity and juſtice. Diſorder, confuſion, the war of all againſt all, are the neceſſary conſequences of ſuch a licentious conduct. But nations can ſubſiſt without intercourſe. They may even ſubſiſt, in ſome degree, under a general war. The obſervance of juſtice, though uſeful among them, is not guarded by ſo ſtrong a neceſſity as among individuals; and the moral obligation holds proportion with the uſefulneſs. All politicians will allow, and moſt philoſophers, that REASONS OF STATE may, in particular emergencies, diſpenſe with the rules of juſtice, and invalidate any treaty or alliance, where the ſtrict obſervance of it would be prejudicial, in a conſiderable degree, to either of the contracting parties. But nothing leſs than the moſt extreme neceſſity, it is confeſſed, can juſtify individuals in a breach of promiſe, or an invaſion of the properties of others.

In a confederated commonwealth, ſuch as the Achæan republic of old, or the Swiſs Cantons and United Provinces in modern times; as the league has here a peculiar utility, the conditions of union have a peculiar ſacredneſs and authority; and a violation of them would be regarded as no leſs, or even as more criminal, than any private injury or injuſtice.

The long and helpleſs infancy of man requires the combination of parents for the ſubſiſtence of their young; and that combination requires the virtue of CHASTITY or fidelity to the marriage-bed. Without ſuch an utility, it will readily be owned, that ſuch a virtue would never have been thought of *.

* See Note [X].

An infidelity of this nature is much more pernicious in women than in men. Hence the laws of chaſtity are much ſtricter over the one ſex than over the other.

Theſe rules have all a reference to generation; and yet women paſt child-bearing are no more ſuppoſed to be exempted from them than thoſe in the flower of their youth and beauty. General rules are often extended beyond the principle whence they firſt ariſe; and in all matters of taſte and ſentiment. It is a vulgar ſtory at Paris, that, during the rage of the Miſſiſſippi, a hump-backed fellow went every day into the Rue de Quincempoix, where the ſtock-jobbers met in great crowds, and was well paid for allowing them to make uſe of his hump as a deſk, in order to ſign their contracts upon it. Would the fortune, which he raiſed by this expedient, make him a handſome fellow; though it be confeſſed, that perſonal beauty ariſes very much from ideas of utility? The imagination is influenced by aſſociations of ideas; which, though they ariſe at firſt from the judgment, are not eaſily altered by every particular exception that occurs to us. To which we may add, in the preſent caſe of chaſtity, that the example of the old would be pernicious to the young; and that women, continually foreſeeing that a certain time would bring them the liberty of indulgence, would naturally advance that period, and think more lightly of this whole duty, ſo requiſite to ſociety.

Thoſe who live in the ſame family have ſuch frequent opportunities of licence of this kind, that nothing could preſerve purity of manners, were marriage allowed, among the neareſt relations, or any intercourſe of love between them ratified by law and cuſtom.

tom. INCEST, therefore, being pernicious in a ſuperior degree, has alſo a ſuperior turpitude and moral deformity annexed to it.

What is the reaſon, why, by the Athenian laws, one might marry a half-ſiſter by the father, but not by the mother? Plainly this: the manners of the Athenians were ſo reſerved, that a man was never permitted to approach the womens apartment, even in the ſame family, unleſs where he viſited his own mother. His ſtep-mother and her children were as much ſhut up from him as the women of any other family, and there was as little danger of any criminal correſpondence between them. Uncles and nieces, for a like reaſon, might marry at Athens; but neither theſe, nor half-brothers and ſiſters, could contract that alliance at Rome, where the intercourſe was more open between the ſexes. Public utility is the cauſe of all theſe variations.

To repeat, to a man's prejudice, any thing that eſcaped him in private converſation, or to make any ſuch uſe of his private letters, is highly blamed. The free and ſocial intercourſe of minds muſt be extremely checked, where no ſuch rules of fidelity are eſtabliſhed.

Even in repeating ſtories, whence we can foreſee no ill conſequences to reſult, the giving of one's author is regarded as a piece of indiſcretion, if not of immorality. Theſe ſtories, in paſſing from hand to hand, and receiving all the uſual variations, frequently come about to the perſons concerned, and produce animoſities and quarrels among people, whoſe intentions are the moſt innocent and inoffenſive.

To pry into ſecrets, to open or even read the letters of others, to play the ſpy upon their words and looks

and actions; what habits more inconvenient in ſociety? What habits, of conſequence, more blameable?

This principle is alſo the foundation of moſt of the laws of good manners; a kind of leſſer morality, calculated for the eaſe of company and converſation. Too much or too little ceremony are both blamed; and every thing which promotes eaſe without an indecent familiarity, is uſeful and laudable.

Conſtancy in friendſhips, attachments, and familiarities, is commendable, and is requiſite to ſupport truſt and good correſpondence in ſociety. But in places of general, though caſual concourſe, where the purſuit of health and pleaſure brings people promiſcuouſly together, public conveniency has diſpenſed with this maxim; and cuſtom there promotes an unreſerved converſation for the time, by indulging the privilege of dropping afterwards every indifferent acquaintance, without breach of civility or good manners.

Even in ſocieties which are eſtabliſhed on principles the moſt immoral, and the moſt deſtructive to the intereſts of the general ſociety, there are required certain rules, which a ſpecies of falſe honour, as well as private intereſt, engages the members to obſerve. Robbers and pirates, it has often been remarked, could not maintain their pernicious confederacy, did they not eſtabliſh a new diſtributive juſtice among themſelves, and recal thoſe laws of equity which they have violated with the reſt of mankind.

I hate a drinking companion, ſays the Greek proverb, who never forgets. The follies of the laſt debauch ſhould be buried in eternal oblivion, in order to give full ſcope to the follies of the next.

Among nations, where an immoral gallantry, if covered with a thin veil of myſtery, is, in ſome degree

gree, authoriſed by cuſtom, there immediately ariſe a ſet of rules, calculated for the conveniency of that attachment. The famous court or parliament of love in Provence formerly decided all difficult caſes of this nature.

In ſocieties for play, there are laws required for the conduct of the game; and theſe laws are different in each game. The foundation, I own, of ſuch ſocieties is frivolous; and the laws are, in a great meaſure, though not altogether, capricious and arbitrary. So far is there a material difference between them and the rules of juſtice, fidelity, and loyalty. The general ſocieties of men are abſolutely requiſite for the ſubſiſtence of the ſpecies; and the public conveniency which regulates morals, is inviolably eſtabliſhed in the nature of man, and of the world, in which he lives. The compariſon, therefore, in theſe reſpects, is very imperfect. We may only learn from it the neceſſity of rules, wherever men have any intercourſe with each other.

They cannot even paſs each other on the road without rules. Waggoners, coachmen, and poſtilions have principles, by which they give the way; and theſe are chiefly founded on mutual eaſe and convenience. Sometimes alſo they are arbitrary, at leaſt dependent on a kind of capricious analogy, like many of the reaſonings of lawyers *.

To carry the matter farther, we may obſerve, that it is impoſſible for men ſo much as to murder each other, without ſtatutes, and maxims, and an idea of juſtice and honour. War has its laws as well as peace; and even that ſportive kind of war, carried on among wreſtlers, boxers, cudgel-players, gladiators,

* See Note [Y.]

is regulated by fixed principles. Common intereſt and utility beget infallibly a ſtandard of right and wrong among the parties concerned.

SECTION V.

Why Utility Pleaſes.

PART I.

IT ſeems ſo natural a thought to aſcribe to their utility the praiſe which we beſtow on the ſocial virtues, that one would expect to meet with this principle every where in moral writers, as the chief foundation of their reaſoning and inquiry. In common life, we may obſerve, that the circumſtance of utility is always appealed to; nor is it ſuppoſed, that a greater eulogy can be given to any man, than to diſplay his uſefulneſs to the public, and enumerate the ſervices which he has performed to mankind and ſociety. What praiſe, even of an inanimate form, if the regularity and elegance of its parts deſtroy not its fitneſs for any uſeful purpoſe! And how ſatisfactory an apology for any diſproportion or ſeeming deformity, if we can ſhow the neceſſity of that particular conſtruction for the uſe intended! A ſhip appears more beautiful to an artiſt, or one moderately ſkilled in navigation, where its prow is wide and ſwelling beyond its poop, than if it were framed with a preciſe geometrical regularity, in contradiction to all the laws of mechanics.

A building, whoſe doors and windows were exact ſquares, would hurt the eye by that very proportion; as ill adapted to the figure of a human creature, for whoſe ſervice the fabric was intended. What wonder then that a man, whoſe habits and conduct are hurtful to ſociety, and dangerous or pernicious to every one who has an intercourſe with him, ſhould, on that account, be an object of diſapprobation, and communicate to every ſpectator the ſtrongeſt ſentiment of diſguſt and hatred *.

But perhaps the difficulty of accounting for theſe effects of uſefulneſs, or its contrary, has kept philoſophers from admitting them into their ſyſtems of ethics, and has induced them rather to employ any other principle in explaining the origin of moral good and evil. But it is no juſt reaſon for rejecting any principle, confirmed by experience, that we cannot give a ſatisfactory account of its origin, nor are able to reſolve it into other more general principles. And if we would employ a little thought on the preſent ſubject, we need be at no loſs to account for the influence of utility, and to deduce it from principles, the moſt known and avowed in human nature.

From the apparent uſefulneſs of the ſocial virtues, it has readily been inferred by ſceptics, both ancient and modern, that all moral diſtinctions ariſe from education, and were, at firſt, invented, and afterwards encouraged, by the art of politicians, in order to render men tractable, and ſubdue their natural ferocity and ſelfiſhneſs, which incapacitated them for ſociety. This principle, indeed, of precept and education, muſt ſo far be owned to have a powerful influence, that it may frequently increaſe or diminiſh, beyond

* See Note [Z].

yond their natural ſtandard, the ſentiments of approbation or diſlike; and may even, in particular inſtances, create, without any natural principle, a new ſentiment of this kind; as is evident in all ſuperſtitious practices and obſervances: that all moral affection or diſlike ariſes from this origin, will never ſurely be allowed by any judicious inquirer. Had nature made no ſuch diſtinction, founded on the original conſtitution of the mind, the words, Honourable and Shameful, Lovely and Odious, Noble and Deſpicable, had never had place in any language; nor could politicians, had they invented theſe terms, ever have been able to render them intelligible, or make them convey any idea to the audience. So that nothing can be more ſuperficial than this paradox of the ſceptics; and it were well, if, in the abſtruſer ſtudies of logic and metaphyſics, we could as eaſily obviate the cavils of that ſect, as in the practical and more intelligible ſciences of politics and morals.

The ſocial virtues muſt, therefore, be allowed to have a natural beauty and amiableneſs, which, at firſt, antecedent to all precept or education, recommends them to the eſteem of uninſtructed mankind, and engages their affections. And as the public utility of theſe virtues is the chief circumſtance whence they derive their merit, it follows, that the end, which they have a tendency to promote, muſt be ſome way agreeable to us, and take hold of ſome natural affection. It muſt pleaſe, either from conſiderations of ſelf-intereſt, or from more generous motives and regards.

It has often been aſſerted, that, as every man has a ſtrong connection with ſociety, and perceives the impoſſibility of his ſolitary ſubſiſtence, he becomes, on

on that account, favourable to all thoſe habits or principles which promote order in ſociety, and inſure to him the quiet poſſeſſion of ſo ineſtimable a bleſſing. As much as we value our own happineſs and welfare, as much muſt we applaud the practice of juſtice and humanity, by which alone the ſocial confederacy can be maintained, and every man reap the fruits of mutual protection and aſſiſtance.

This deduction of morals from ſelf-love, or a regard to private intereſt, is an obvious thought, and has not ariſen wholly from the wanton ſallies and ſportive aſſaults of the ſceptics. To mention no others, Polybius, one of the graveſt and moſt judicious, as well as moſt moral writers of antiquity, has aſſigned this ſelfiſh origin to all our ſentiments of virtue *. But though the ſolid, practical ſenſe of that author, and his averſion to all vain ſubtilities, render his authority on the preſent ſubject very conſiderable; yet is not this an affair to be decided by authority; and the voice of nature and experience ſeems plainly to oppoſe the ſelfiſh theory.

We frequently beſtow praiſe on virtuous actions, performed in very diſtant ages and remote countries; where the utmoſt ſubtility of imagination would not diſcover any appearance of ſelf-intereſt, or find any connection of our preſent happineſs and ſecurity with events ſo widely ſeparated from us.

A generous, a brave, a noble deed, performed by an adverſary, commands our approbation; while, in its conſequences, it may be acknowledged prejudicial to our particular intereſt.

Where private advantage occurs, with general affection for virtue, we readily perceive and avow the mixture

* See Note [AA].

ture of theſe diſtinct ſentiments, which have a very different feeling and influence on the mind. We praiſe, perhaps, with more alacrity, where the generous, humane action contributes to our particular intereſt; But the topics of praiſe, which we inſiſt on, are very wide of this circumſtance. And we may attempt to bring over others to our ſentiments, without endeavouring to convince them, that they reap any advantage from the actions which we recommend to their approbation and applauſe.

Frame the model of a praiſe-worthy character, conſiſting of all the moſt amiable moral virtues; give inſtances, in which theſe diſplay themſelves after an eminent and extraordinary manner: You readily engage the eſteem and approbation of all your audience, who never ſo much as inquire in what age and country the perſon lived who poſſeſſed theſe noble qualities: A circumſtance, however, of all others, the moſt material to ſelf-love, or a concern for our own individual happineſs.

Once on a time, a ſtateſman, in the ſhock and conteſt of parties, prevailed ſo far as to procure, by his eloquence, the baniſhment of an able adverſary; whom he ſecretly followed, offering him money for his ſupport during his exile, and ſoothing him with topics of conſolation in his misfortunes. "Alas!" cries the baniſhed ſtateſman, "with what regret muſt I leave my friends in this city, where even enemies are ſo generous!" Virtue, though in an enemy, here pleaſed him: And we alſo give it the juſt tribute of praiſe and approbation; nor do we retract theſe ſentiments, when we hear, that the action paſſed at Athens, about two thouſand years ago, and that the perſons names were Eſchines and Demoſthenes.

"What

"What is that to me?" There are few occaſions when this queſtion is not pertinent: And had it that univerſal, infallible influence ſuppoſed, it would turn into ridicule every compoſition, and almoſt every converſation which contain any praiſe or cenſure of men and manners.

It is but a weak ſubterfuge, when preſſed by theſe facts and arguments, to ſay, that we tranſport ourſelves by the force of imagination, into diſtant ages and countries, and conſider the advantage, which we ſhould have reaped from theſe characters, had we been contemporaries, and had any commerce with the perſons. It is not conceivable, how a real ſentiment or paſſion can ever ariſe from a known imaginary intereſt; eſpecially when our real intereſt is ſtill kept in view, and is often acknowledged to be entirely diſtinct from the imaginary, and even ſometimes oppoſite to it.

A man, brought to the brink of a precipice, cannot look down without trembling; and the ſentiment of imaginary danger actuates him, in oppoſition to the opinion and belief of real ſafety. But the imagination is here aſſiſted by the preſence of a ſtriking object; and yet prevails not, except it be alſo aided by novelty, and the unuſual appearance of the object. Cuſtom ſoon reconciles us to heights and precipices, and wears off theſe falſe and deluſive terrors. The reverſe is obſervable in the eſtimates which we form of characters and manners; and the more we habituate ourſelves to an accurate ſcrutiny of morals, the more delicate feeling do we acquire of the moſt minute diſtinctions between vice and virtue. Such frequent occaſion, indeed, have we, in common life, to pronounce all kinds of moral determinations, that no object of this kind can be new or unuſual to us; nor could any falſe

falſe views or prepoſſeſſions maintain their ground againſt an experience ſo common and familiar. Experience being chiefly what forms the aſſociations of ideas, it is impoſſible that any aſſociation could eſtabliſh and ſupport itſelf, in direct oppoſition to that principle.

Uſefulneſs is agreeable, and engages our approbation. This is a matter of fact, confirmed by daily obſervation. But, uſeful? For what? For ſome body's intereſt, ſurely? Whoſe intereſt then? Not our own only: For our approbation frequently extends farther. It muſt, therefore, be the intereſt of thoſe who are ſerved by the character or action approved of; and theſe we may conclude, however remote, are not totally indifferent to us. By opening up this principle, we ſhall diſcover one great ſource of moral diſtinctions.

PART II.

Self-love is a principle in human nature of ſuch extenſive energy, and the intereſt of each individual is, in general, ſo cloſely connected with that of the community, that thoſe philoſophers were excuſable, who fancied, that all our concern for the public might be reſolved into a concern for our own happineſs and preſervation. They ſaw every moment, inſtances of approbation or blame, ſatisfaction or diſpleaſure, towards characters and actions; they denominated the objects of theſe ſentiments, Virtues or Vices; they obſerved, that the former had a tendency to increaſe the happineſs, and the latter the miſery of mankind; they aſked, whether it were poſſible that we could have any general concern for ſociety, or any diſintereſted

eſted reſentment of the welfare or injury of others? they found it ſimpler to conſider all theſe ſentiments as modifications of ſelf-love; and they diſcovered a pretence, at leaſt, for this unity of principle, in that cloſe union of intereſt, which is ſo obſervable between the public and each individual.

But notwithſtanding this frequent confuſion of intereſts, it is eaſy to attain what natural philoſophers, after Lord Bacon, have affected to call the *experimentum crucis*, or that experiment which points out the right way in any doubt or ambiguity. We have found inſtances, in which private intereſt was ſeparate from public; in which it was even contrary: And yet we obſerved the moral ſentiment to continue, notwithſtanding this disjunction of intereſts. And wherever theſe diſtinct intereſts ſenſibly concurred, we always found a ſenſible increaſe of the ſentiment, and a more warm affection to virtue, and deteſtation of vice, or what we properly call Gratitude and Revenge. Compelled by theſe inſtances, we muſt renounce the theory which accounts for every moral ſentiment by the principle of ſelf-love. We muſt adopt a more public affection, and allow, that the intereſts of ſociety are not, even on their own account, entirely indifferent to us. Uſefulneſs is only a tendency to a certain end; and it is a contradiction in terms, that any thing pleaſes as means to an end, where the end itſelf nowiſe affects us. If uſefulneſs, therefore, be a ſource of moral ſentiment, and if this uſefulneſs be not always conſidered with a reference to ſelf; it follows, that every thing which contributes to the happineſs of ſociety, recommends itſelf directly to our approbation and good-will. Here is a principle which accounts, in great part, for the origin of morality: And what need we

ſeek

ſeek for abſtruſe and remote ſyſtems, when there occurs one ſo obvious and natural *?

Have we any difficulty to comprehend the force of humanity and benevolence? Or to conceive that the very aſpect of happineſs, joy, proſperity, gives pleaſure; that of pain, ſuffering, ſorrow, communicates uneaſineſs? The human countenance, ſays Horace†, borrows ſmiles or tears from the human countenance. Reduce a perſon to ſolitude, and he loſes all enjoyment, except either of the ſenſual or ſpeculative kind; and that becauſe the movements of his heart are not forwarded by correſpondent movements in his fellow-creatures. The ſigns of ſorrow and mourning, though arbitrary, affect us with melancholy; but the natural ſymptoms, tears and cries and groans, never fail to infuſe compaſſion and uneaſineſs. And if the effects of miſery touch us in ſo lively a manner, can we be ſuppoſed altogether inſenſible or indifferent towards its cauſes; when a malicious or treacherous character and behaviour are preſented to us?

We enter, I ſhall ſuppoſe, into a convenient, warm, well-contrived apartment: we neceſſarily receive a pleaſure from its very ſurvey; becauſe it preſents us with the pleaſing ideas of eaſe, ſatisfaction, and enjoyment. The hoſpitable, good-humoured, humane landlord appears. This circumſtance ſurely muſt embelliſh the whole; nor can we eaſily forbear reflecting, with pleaſure, on the ſatisfaction which reſults to every one from his intercourſe and good offices.

His whole family, by the freedom, eaſe, confidence, and calm enjoyment, diffuſed over their countenances, ſufficiently

* See Note [B B].

† Uti ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adflent
Humani vultus. Hor.

ſufficiently expreſs their happineſs. I have a pleaſing ſympathy in the proſpect of ſo much joy, and can never conſider the ſource of it without the moſt agreeable emotions.

He tells me, that an oppreſſive and powerful neighbour had attempted to diſpoſſeſs him of his inheritance, and had long diſturbed all his innocent and ſocial pleaſures. I feel an immediate indignation ariſe in me againſt ſuch violence and injury.

But it is no wonder, he adds, that a private wrong ſhould proceed from a man who had enſlaved provinces, depopulated cities, and made the field and ſcaffold ſtream with human blood. I am ſtruck with horror at the proſpect of ſo much miſery, and am actuated by the ſtrongeſt antipathy againſt its author.

In general, it is certain, that, wherever we go, whatever we reflect on or converſe about, every thing ſtill preſents us with the view of human happineſs or miſery, and excites in our breaſt a ſympathetic movement of pleaſure or uneaſineſs. In our ſerious occupations, in our careleſs amuſements, this principle ſtill exerts its active energy.

A man who enters the theatre, is immediately ſtruck with the view of ſo great a multitude participating of one common amuſement; and experiences, from their very aſpect, a ſuperior ſenſibility or diſpoſition of being affected with every ſentiment which he ſhares with his fellow-creatures.

He obſerves the actors to be animated by the appearance of a full audience, and raiſed to a degree of enthuſiaſm, which they cannot command in any ſolitary or calm moment.

Every movement of the theatre, by a ſkilful poet, is communicated, as it were by magic, to the ſpectators;

who weep, tremble, reſent, rejoice, and are inflamed with all the variety of paſſions, which actuate the ſeveral perſonages of the drama.

Where any event croſſes our wiſhes, and interrupts the happineſs of the favourite characters, we feel a ſenſible anxiety and concern. But where their ſufferings proceed from the treachery, cruelty, or tyranny of an enemy, our breaſts are affected with the livelieſt reſentment againſt the author of theſe calamities.

It is here eſteemed contrary to the rules of art to repreſent any thing cool and indifferent. A diſtant friend, or a confident, who has no immediate intereſt in the cataſtrophe, ought, if poſſible, to be avoided by the poet; as communicating a like indifference to the audience, and checking the progreſs of the paſſions.

Few ſpecies of poetry are more entertaining than paſtoral; and every one is ſenſible, that the chief ſource of its pleaſure ariſes from thoſe images of a gentle and tender tranquillity, which it repreſents in its perſonages, and of which it communicates a like ſentiment to the reader. Sannazarius, who transferred the ſcene to the ſea-ſhore, though he preſented the moſt magnificent object in nature, is confeſſed to have erred in his choice. The idea of toil, labour, and danger, ſuffered by the fiſhermen, is painful; by an unavoidable ſympathy, which attends every conception of human happineſs or miſery.

When I was twenty, ſays a French poet, Ovid was my favourite: Now I am forty, I declare for Horace. We enter, to be ſure, more readily into ſentiments which reſemble thoſe we feel every day: but no paſſion, when well repreſented, can be entirely indifferent to us; becauſe there is none, of which every man has not, within him, at leaſt the ſeeds and firſt principles.

It

It is the buſineſs of poetry to bring every affection near to us by lively imagery and repreſentation, and make it look like truth and reality: A certain proof, that wherever that reality is found, our minds are diſpoſed to be ſtrongly affected by it.

Any recent event or piece of news, by which the fate of ſtates, provinces, or many individuals is affected, is extremely intereſting even to thoſe whoſe welfare is not immediately engaged. Such intelligence is propagated with celerity, heard with avidity, and inquired into with attention and concern. The intereſt of ſociety appears, on this occaſion, to be, in ſome degree, the intereſt of each individual. The imagination is ſure to be affected; though the paſſions excited may not always be ſo ſtrong and ſteady as to have great influence on the conduct and behaviour.

The peruſal of a hiſtory ſeems a calm entertainment; but would be no entertainment at all, did not our hearts beat with correſpondent movements to thoſe which are deſcribed by the hiſtorian.

Thucydides and Guicciardin ſupport with difficulty our attention; while the former deſcribes the trivial rencounters of the ſmall cities of Greece, and the latter the harmleſs wars of Piſa. The few perſons intereſted, and the ſmall intereſt, fill not the imagination, and engage not the affections. The deep diſtreſs of the numerous Athenian army before Syracuſe, the danger which ſo nearly threatens Venice; theſe excite compaſſion, theſe move terror and anxiety.

The indifferent, unintereſting ſtyle of Suetonius, equally with the maſterly pencil of Tacitus, may convince us of the cruel depravity of Nero or Tiberius. But what a difference of ſentiment! While the former coldly relates the facts, and the latter ſets before our

eyes the venerable figures of a Soranus and a Thraſea, intrepid in their fate, and only moved by the melting ſorrows of their friends and kindred: What ſympathy then touches every human heart! What indignation againſt the tyrant, whoſe cauſeleſs fear or unprovoked malice gave riſe to ſuch deteſtable barbarity!

If we bring theſe ſubjects nearer; if we remove all ſuſpicion of fiction and deceit; what powerful concern is excited, and how much ſuperior, in many inſtances, to the narrow attachments of ſelf-love and private intereſt! Popular ſedition, party zeal, a devoted obedience to factious leaders; theſe are ſome of the moſt viſible, though leſs laudable, effects of this ſocial ſympathy in human nature.

The frivolouſneſs of the ſubject too, we may obſerve, is not able to detach us entirely from what carries an image of human ſentiment and affection.

When a perſon ſtutters, and pronounces with difficulty, we even ſympathize with this trivial uneaſineſs, and ſuffer for him. And it is a rule in criticiſm, that every combination of ſyllables or letters, which gives pain to the organs of ſpeech in the recital, appears alſo, from a ſpecies of ſympathy, harſh and diſagreeable to the ear. Nay, when we run over a book with our eye, we are ſenſible of ſuch unharmonious compoſition; becauſe we ſtill imagine that a perſon recites it to us, and ſuffers from the pronunciation of theſe jarring ſounds. So delicate is our ſympathy.

Eaſy and unconſtrained poſtures and motions are always beautiful: An air of health and vigour is agreeable; clothes which warm without burdening the body, which cover without impriſoning the limbs, are well-faſhioned. In every judgment of beauty, the feelings of the perſon affected enter into conſideration, and

and communicate to the ſpectator ſimilar touches of pain or pleaſure *. What wonder, then, if we can pronounce no judgment concerning the character and conduct of men, without conſidering the tendencies of their actions, and the happineſs or miſery which thence ariſes to ſociety? what aſſociation of ideas would ever operate, were that principle here totally unactive †?

If any man, from a cold inſenſibility, or narrow ſelfiſhneſs of temper, is unaffected with the images of human happineſs or miſery, he muſt be equally indifferent to the images of vice and virtue: As, on the other hand, it is always found, that a warm concern for the intereſts of our ſpecies is attended with a delicate feeling of all moral diſtinctions; a ſtrong reſentment of injury done to men; a lively approbation of their welfare. In this particular, though great ſuperiority is obſervable of one man above another, yet none are ſo entirely indifferent to the intereſt of their fellow-creatures, as to perceive no diſtinctions of moral good and evil, in conſequence of the different tendencies of actions and principles. How, indeed, can we ſuppoſe it poſſible in any one, who wears a human heart, that if there be ſubjected to his cenſure, one character or ſyſtem of conduct which is beneficial, and another which is pernicious, to his ſpecies or community, he will not ſo much as give a cool preference to the former, or aſcribe to it the ſmalleſt merit or regard? Let us ſuppoſe ſuch a perſon ever ſo ſelfiſh; let private intereſt

* "Decentior equus cujus aſtricta ſunt ilia; ſed idem velocior. "Pulcher aſpectu ſit athleta, cujus lacertos exercitatio expreſſit; idem "certamini paratior. Nunquam enim *ſpecies* ab *utilitate* dividitur. "Sed hoc quidem diſcernere modici judicii eſt." Quintilian. Inſt. lib. viii. cap. 3.

† See Note [CC].

have ingroſſed ever ſo much his attention; yet in inſtances where that is not concerned, he muſt unavoidably feel ſome propenſity to the good of mankind, and make it an object of choice, if every thing elſe be equal. Would any man who is walking along, tread as willingly on another's gouty toes, whom he has no quarrel with, as on the hard flint and pavement? There is here ſurely a difference in the caſe. We ſurely take into conſideration the happineſs and miſery of others, in weighing the ſeveral motives of action, and incline to the former, where no private regards draw us to ſeek our own promotion or advantage by the injury of our fellow-creatures. And if the principles of humanity are capable, in many inſtances, of influencing our actions, they muſt, at all times, have ſome authority over our ſentiments, and give us a general approbation of what is uſeful to ſociety, and blame of what is dangerous or pernicious. The degrees of theſe ſentiments may be the ſubject of controverſy; but the reality of their exiſtence, one ſhould think, muſt be admitted in every theory or ſyſtem.

A creature, abſolutely malicious and ſpiteful, were there any ſuch in nature, muſt be worſe than indifferent to the images of vice and virtue. All his ſentiments muſt be inverted, and directly oppoſite to thoſe which prevail in the human ſpecies. Whatever contributes to the good of mankind, as it croſſes the conſtant bent of his wiſhes and deſires, muſt produce uneaſineſs and diſapprobation; and on the contrary, whatever is the ſource of diſorder and miſery in ſociety, muſt, for the ſame reaſon, be regarded with pleaſure and complacency. Timon, who, probably from his affected ſpleen, more than any inveterate malice, was denominated the man-hater, embraced Alcibiades

with

with great fondneſs. "Go on, my boy!" cried he, "acquire the confidence of the people: You will one day, I foreſee, be the cauſe of great calamities to them*." Could we admit the two principles of the Manicheans, it is an infallible conſequence, that their ſentiments of human actions, as well as of every thing elſe, muſt be totally oppoſite; and that every inſtance of juſtice and humanity, from its neceſſary tendency, muſt pleaſe the one deity, and diſpleaſe the other. All mankind ſo far reſemble the good principle, that, where intereſt, or revenge, or envy, perverts not our diſpoſition, we are always inclined, from our natural philanthrophy, to give the preference to the happineſs of ſociety, and conſequently to virtue, above its oppoſite. Abſolute, unprovoked, diſintereſted malice, has never, perhaps, place in any human breaſt; or, if it had, muſt there pervert all the ſentiments of morals, as well as the feelings of humanity. If the cruelty of Nero be allowed entirely voluntary, and not rather the effect of conſtant fear and reſentment; it is evident, that Tigellinus, preferably to Seneca or Burrhus, muſt have poſſeſſed his ſteady and uniform approbation.

A ſtateſman or patriot, who ſerves our own country, in our own time, has always a more paſſionate regard paid to him, than one whoſe beneficial influence operated on diſtant ages or remote nations; where the good, reſulting from his generous humanity, being leſs connected with us, ſeems more obſcure, and affects us with a leſs lively ſympathy. We may own the merit to be equally great, though our ſentiments are not raiſed to an equal height in both caſes. The judgment here corrects the inequalities of our

* Plutarch in vita Alcibiad.

internal emotions and perceptions; in like manner, as it preſerves us from error in the ſeveral variations of images preſented to our external ſenſes. The ſame object, at a double diſtance, really throws on the eye a picture of but half the bulk; yet we imagine that it appears of the ſame ſize in both ſituations; becauſe we know that, on our approach to it, its image would expand on the eye, and that the difference conſiſts not in the object itſelf, but in our poſition with regard to it. And indeed, without ſuch a correction of appearances, both in internal and external ſentiment, men could never think or talk ſteadily on any ſubject; while their fluctuating ſituations produce a continual variation on objects, and throw them into ſuch different and contrary lights and poſitions *.

The more we converſe with mankind, and the greater ſocial intercourſe we maintain, the more ſhall we be familiarized to theſe general preferences and diſtinctions, without which our converſation and diſcourſe could ſcarcely be rendered intelligible to each other. Every man's intereſt is peculiar to himſelf; and the averſions and deſires, which reſult from it, cannot be ſuppoſed to affect others in a like degree. General language, therefore, being formed for general uſe, muſt be moulded on ſome more general views, and muſt affix the epithets of praiſe or blame, in conformity to ſentiments which ariſe from the general intereſts of the community: And if theſe ſentiments, in moſt men, be not ſo ſtrong as thoſe which have a reference to private good; yet ſtill they muſt make ſome diſtinction, even in perſons the moſt depraved and ſelfiſh; and muſt attach the notion of good to a beneficent conduct, and of evil to the contrary. Sympathy, we

* See Note [DD].

we ſhall allow, is much fainter than our concern for ourſelves; and ſympathy with perſons remote from us, much fainter than that with perſons near and contiguous; but for this very reaſon, it is neceſſary for us, in our calm judgments and diſcourſe concerning the characters of men, to neglect all theſe differences, and render our ſentiments more public and ſocial. Beſides, that we ourſelves often change our ſituation in this particular, we every day meet with perſons who are in a ſituation different from us, and who could never converſe with us, were we to remain conſtantly in that poſition and point of view, which is peculiar to ourſelves. The intercourſe of ſentiments, therefore, in ſociety and converſation, makes us form ſome general unalterable ſtandard, by which we may approve or diſapprove of characters and manners. And though the heart takes not part entirely with thoſe general notions, nor regulates all its love and hatred, by the univerſal, abſtract differences of vice and virtue, without regard to ſelf, or the perſons with whom we are more intimately connected; yet have theſe moral differences a conſiderable influence, and being ſufficient, at leaſt, for diſcourſe, ſerve all our purpoſes in company, in the pulpit, on the theatre, and in the ſchools *.

Thus, in whatever light we take this ſubject, the merit aſcribed to the ſocial virtues appears ſtill uniform, and ariſes chiefly from that regard, which the natural ſentiment of benevolence engages us to pay to the intereſts of mankind and ſociety. If we conſider the principles of the human make, ſuch as they appear to daily experience and obſervation, we muſt, *à priori*, conclude it impoſſible for ſuch a creature as man to be totally indifferent to the well or ill-being of his fellow-creatures,

* See Note [EE].

creatures, and not readily, of himſelf, to pronounce where nothing gives him any particular bias, that what promotes their happineſs is good, what tends to their miſery is evil, without any farther regard or conſideration. Here then are the faint rudiments, at leaſt, or outlines, of a general diſtinction between actions; and in proportion as the humanity of the perſon is ſuppoſed to increaſe his connection with thoſe who are injured or benefited, and his lively conception of their miſery or happineſs; his conſequent cenſure or approbation acquires proportionable vigour. There is no neceſſity that a generous action, barely mentioned in an old hiſtory or remote gazette, ſhould communicate any ſtrong feelings of applauſe and admiration. Virtue, placed at ſuch a diſtance, is like a fixed ſtar, which, though to the eye of reaſon it may appear as luminous as the ſun in his meridian, is ſo infinitely removed, as to affect the ſenſes neither with light nor heat. Bring this virtue nearer, by our acquaintance or connection with the perſons, or even by an elegant recital of the caſe; our hearts are immediately caught, our ſympathy enlivened, and our cool approbation converted into the warmeſt ſentiments of friendſhip and regard. Theſe ſeem neceſſary and infallible conſequences of the general principles of human nature, as diſcovered in common life and practice.

Again; reverſe theſe views and reaſonings: Conſider the matter *à poſteriori*; and, weighing the conſequences, inquire if the merit of ſocial virtue be not in a great meaſure derived from the feelings of humanity, with which it affects the ſpectators. It appears to be a matter of fact, that the circumſtance of Utility, in all ſubjects, is a ſource of praiſe and approbation: That

That it is conſtantly appealed to in all moral deciſions concerning the merit and demerit of actions: That it is the ſole ſource of that high regard paid to juſtice, fidelity, honour, allegiance, and chaſtity: That it is inſeparable from all the other ſocial virtues, humanity, generoſity, charity, affability, lenity, mercy, and moderation: And, in a word, that it is a foundation of the chief part of morals, which has a reference to mankind and our fellow-creatures.

It appears alſo, that, in our general approbation of characters and manners, the uſeful tendency of the ſocial virtues moves us not by any regards to ſelf-intereſt, but has an influence much more univerſal and extenſive. It appears, that a tendency to public good, and to the promoting of peace, harmony, and order in ſociety, does always, by affecting the benevolent principles of our frame, engage us on the ſide of the ſocial virtues. And it appears, as an additional confirmation, that theſe principles of humanity and ſympathy enter ſo deeply into all our ſentiments, and have ſo powerful an influence, as may enable them to excite the ſtrongeſt cenſure and applauſe. The preſent theory is the ſimple reſult of all theſe inferences; each of which ſeems founded on uniform experience and obſervation.

Were it doubtful, whether there were any ſuch principle in our nature as humanity or a concern for others; yet when we ſee, in numberleſs inſtances, that whatever has a tendency to promote the intereſts of ſociety, is ſo highly approved of, we ought thence to learn the force of the benevolent principle; ſince it is impoſſible for any thing to pleaſe as means to an end, where the end is totally indifferent. On the other hand, were it doubtful whether there were implanted

planted in our nature any general principle of moral blame and approbation; yet when we ſee, in numberleſs inſtances, the influence of humanity, we ought thence to conclude, that it is impoſſible but that every thing which promotes the intereſt of ſociety, muſt communicate pleaſure, and what is pernicious give uneaſineſs: But when theſe different reflections and obſervations concur in eſtabliſhing the ſame concluſion, muſt they not beſtow an undiſputed evidence upon it?

It is however hoped, that the progreſs of this argument will bring a farther confirmation of the preſent theory, by ſhowing the riſe of other ſentiments of eſteem and regard from the ſame or like principles.

SECTION VI.

Of Qualities Uſeful to Ourſelves.

PART I.

IT ſeems evident, that where a quality or habit is ſubjected to our examination, if it appear in any reſpect prejudicial to the perſon poſſeſſed of it, or ſuch as incapacitates him for buſineſs and action, it is inſtantly blamed, and ranked among his faults and imperfections. Indolence, negligence, want of order and method, obſtinacy, fickleneſs, raſhneſs, credulity; theſe qualities were never eſteemed by any one indifferent

ferent to a character; much leſs extolled as accompliſhments or virtues. The prejudice, reſulting from them, immediately ſtrikes our eye, and gives us the ſentiment of pain and diſapprobation.

No quality, it is allowed, is abſolutely either blameable or praiſeworthy. It is all according to its degree. A due medium, ſay the Peripatetics, is the characteriſtic of virtue. But this medium is chiefly determined by utility. A proper celerity, for inſtance, and diſpatch in buſineſs, is commendable. When defective, no progreſs is ever made in the execution of any purpoſe: When exceſſive, it engages us in precipitate and ill-concerted meaſures and enterpriſes: By ſuch reaſonings, we fix the proper and commendable mediocrity in all moral and prudential diſquiſitions; and never loſe view of the advantages which reſult from any character or habit.

Now as theſe advantages are enjoyed by the perſon poſſeſſed of the character, it can never be ſelf-love which renders the proſpect of them agreeable to us the ſpectators, and prompts our eſteem and approbation. No force of imagination can convert us into another perſon, and make us fancy, that we, being that perſon, reap benefit from thoſe valuable qualities which belong to him: Or if it did, no celerity of imagination could immediately tranſport us back into ourſelves, and make us love and eſteem the perſon as different from us. Views and ſentiments ſo oppoſite to known truth, and to each other, could never have place, at the ſame time, in the ſame perſon. All ſuſpicion, therefore, of ſelfiſh regards, is here totally excluded. It is a quite different principle which actuates our boſom, and intereſts us in the felicity of the perſon whom we contemplate. Where his natural talents

and

and acquired abilities give us the proſpect of elevation, advancement, a figure in life, proſperous ſucceſs, a ſteady command over fortune, and the execution of great or advantageous undertakings; we are ſtruck with ſuch agreeable images, and feel a complacency and regard immediately ariſe towards him. The ideas of happineſs, joy, triumph, proſperity, are connected with every circumſtance of his character, and diffuſe over our minds a pleaſing ſentiment of ſympathy and humanity *.

Let us ſuppoſe a perſon originally framed ſo as to have no manner of concern for his fellow-creatures, but to regard the happineſs and miſery of all ſenſible beings with greater indifference than even two contiguous ſhades of the ſame colour. Let us ſuppoſe, if the proſperity of nations were laid on the one hand, and their ruin on the other, and he were deſired to chooſe, that he would ſtand, like the ſchoolman's aſs, irreſolute and undetermined, between equal motives; or rather, like the ſame aſs, between two pieces of wood or marble, without any inclination or propenſity to either ſide. The conſequence, I believe, muſt be allowed juſt, that ſuch a perſon being abſolutely unconcerned, either for the public good of a community, or the private utility of others, would look on every quality, however pernicious, or however beneficial to ſociety, or to its poſſeſſor, with the ſame indifference as on the moſt common and unintereſting object.

But if, inſtead of this fancied monſter, we ſuppoſe a man to form a judgment or determination in the caſe, there is to him a plain foundation of preference, where every thing elſe is equal; and however cool his choice may

* See Note [FF.]

may be, if his heart be ſelfiſh, or if the perſons intereſted be remote from him, there muſt ſtill be a choice or diſtinction between what is uſeful and what is pernicious. Now this diſtinction is the ſame in all its parts, with the moral diſtinction, whoſe foundation has been ſo often, and ſo much in vain, inquired after. The ſame endowments of the mind, in every circumſtance, are agreeable to the ſentiment of morals and to that of humanity: The ſame temper is ſuſceptible of high degrees of the one ſentiment and of the other; and the ſame alteration in the objects, by their nearer approach or by connections, enlivens the one and the other. By all the rules of philoſophy, therefore, we muſt conclude, that theſe ſentiments are originally the ſame; ſince, in each particular, even the moſt minute, they are governed by the ſame laws, and are moved by the ſame objects.

Why do philoſophers infer, with the greateſt certainty, that the moon is kept in its orbit by the ſame force of gravity, that makes bodies fall near the ſurface of the earth, but becauſe theſe effects are, upon computation, found ſimilar and equal? And muſt not this argument bring as ſtrong conviction in moral as in natural diſquiſitions?

To prove, by any long detail, that all the qualities uſeful to the poſſeſſor are approved of, and the contrary cenſured, would be ſuperfluous. The leaſt reflection on what is every day experienced in life will be ſufficient. We ſhall only mention a few inſtances, in order to remove, if poſſible, all doubt and heſitation.

The quality, the moſt neceſſary for the execution of any uſeful enterpriſe, is DISCRETION; by which we carry on a ſafe intercourſe with others, give due attention

tention to our own and to their character, weigh each circumſtance of the buſineſs which we undertake, and employ the ſureſt and ſafeſt means for the attainment of any end or purpoſe. To a Cromwell, perhaps, or a De Retz, diſcretion may appear an alderman-like virtue, as Dr Swift calls it; and, being incompatible with thoſe vaſt deſigns, to which their courage and ambition prompted them, it might really in them be a fault or imperfection. But in the conduct of ordinary life, no virtue is more requiſite, not only to obtain ſucceſs, but to avoid the moſt fatal miſcarriages and diſappointments. The greateſt parts without it, as obſerved by an elegant writer, may be fatal to their owner; as Polyphemus, deprived of his eye, was only the more expoſed, on account of his enormous ſtrength and ſtature.

The beſt character, indeed, were it not rather too perfect for human nature, is that which is not ſwayed by temper of any kind; but alternately employs enterpriſe and caution, as each is uſeful to the particular purpoſe intended. Such is the excellence which St Evremond aſcribes to Mareſchal Turenne, who diſplayed, every campaign as he grew older, more temerity in his military enterpriſes; and being now, from long experience, perfectly acquainted with every incident in war, he advanced with greater firmneſs and ſecurity, in a road ſo well known to him. Fabius, ſays Machiavel, was cautious; Scipio enterpriſing: And both ſucceeded, becauſe the ſituation of the Roman affairs, during the command of each, was peculiarly adapted to his genius; but both would have failed, had theſe ſituations been reverſed. He is happy, whoſe circumſtances ſuit his temper; but he is more excellent,

excellent, who can ſuit his temper to any circumſtances.

What need is there to diſplay the praiſes of INDUSTRY, and to extol its advantages, in the acquiſition of power and riches, or in raiſing what we call a fortune in the world? The tortoiſe, according to the fable, by his perſeverance, gained the race of the hare, though poſſeſſed of much ſuperior ſwiftneſs. A man's time, when well huſbanded, is like a cultivated field, of which a few acres produce more of what is uſeful to life, than extenſive provinces, even of the richeſt ſoil, when overrun with weeds and brambles.

But all proſpect of ſucceſs in life, or even of tolerable ſubſiſtence, muſt fail, where a reaſonable FRUGALITY is wanting. The heap, inſtead of increaſing, diminiſhes daily, and leaves its poſſeſſor ſo much more unhappy, as, not having been able to confine his expences to a large revenue, he will ſtill leſs be able to live contentedly on a ſmall one. The ſouls of men, according to Plato *, inflamed with impure appetites, and loſing the body, which alone afforded means of ſatisfaction, hover about the earth, and haunt the places where their bodies are depoſited; poſſeſſed with a longing deſire to recover the loſt organs of ſenſation. So may we ſee worthleſs prodigals, having conſumed their fortune in wild debauches, thruſting themſelves into every plentiful table, and every party of pleaſure; hated even by the vicious, and deſpiſed even by fools.

The one extreme of frugality is Avarice, which, as it both deprives a man of all uſe of his riches, and checks hoſpitality and every ſocial enjoyment, is juſtly cenſured on a double account. Prodigality, the other ex-

* Phædo.

treme, is commonly more hurtful to a man himſelf; and each of theſe extremes is blamed above the other, according to the temper of the perſon who cenſures, and according to his greater or leſs ſenſibility to pleaſure, either ſocial or ſenſual.

Qualities often derive their merit from complicated ſources. Honeſty, fidelity, truth, are praiſed for their immediate tendency to promote the intereſts of ſociety; but after thoſe virtues are once eſtabliſhed upon this foundation, they are alſo conſidered as advantageous to the perſon himſelf, and as the ſource of that truſt and confidence which can alone give a man any conſideration in life. One becomes contemptible, no leſs than odious, when he forgets the duty which, in in this particular, he owes to himſelf as well as to ſociety.

Perhaps this conſideration is one chief ſource of the high blame which is thrown on any inſtance of failure among women in point of chaſtity. The greateſt regard which can be acquired by that ſex, is derived from their fidelity; and a woman becomes cheap and vulgar, loſes her rank, and is expoſed to every inſult, who is deficient in this particular. The ſmalleſt failure is here ſufficient to blaſt her character. A female has ſo many opportunities of ſecretly indulging theſe appetites, that nothing can give us ſecurity but her abſolute modeſty and reſerve; and where a breach is once made, it can ſcarcely ever be fully repaired. If a man behave with cowardice on one occaſion, a contrary conduct reinſtates him in his character. But by what action can a woman, whoſe behaviour has once been diſſolute, be able to aſſure us, that ſhe has formed better reſolutions, and has ſelf-command enough to carry them into execution?

All

All men, it is allowed, are equally desirous of happiness; but few are successful in the pursuit: One considerable cause is the want of STRENGTH of MIND, which might enable them to resist the temptation of present ease or pleasure, and carry them forward in the search of more distant profit and enjoyment. Our affections, on a general prospect of their objects, form certain rules of conduct, and certain measures of preference, of one above another: And these decisions, though really the result of our calm passions and propensities (for what else can pronounce any object eligible, or the contrary?) are yet said, by a natural abuse of terms, to be the determinations of pure reason and reflection. But when some of these objects approach nearer to us, or acquire the advantages of favourable lights and positions, which catch the heart or imagination; our general resolutions are frequently confounded, a small enjoyment preferred, and lasting shame and sorrow entailed upon us. And however poets may employ their wit and eloquence in celebrating present pleasure, and rejecting all distant views to fame, health, or fortune; it is obvious, that this practice is the source of all dissoluteness and disorder, repentance and misery. A man of a strong and determinate temper adheres tenaciously to his general resolutions, and is neither seduced by the allurements of pleasure, nor terrified by the menaces of pain; but keeps still in view those distant pursuits, by which he, at once, ensures his happiness and his honour.

Self-satisfaction, at least in some degree, is an advantage which equally attends the FOOL and the WISE MAN: but it is the only one; nor is there any other circumstance in the conduct of life where they are upon an equal footing. Business, books, conversation;

for all of theſe, a fool is totally incapacitated; and, except condemned by his ſtation to the coarſeſt drudgery, remains a uſeleſs burden upon the earth. Accordingly it is found, that men are extremely jealous of their character in this particular; and many inſtances are ſeen of profligacy and treachery, the moſt avowed and unreſerved; none of bearing patiently the imputation of ignorance and ſtupidity. Dicæarchus, the Macedonian general, who, as Polybius tells us *, openly erected one altar to impiety, another to injuſtice, in order to bid defiance to mankind; even he, I am well aſſured, would have ſtarted at the epithet of fool, and have meditated revenge for ſo injurious an appellation. Except the affection of parents, the ſtrongeſt and moſt indiſſoluble bond in nature, no connection has ſtrength ſufficient to ſupport the diſguſt ariſing from this character. Love itſelf, which can ſubſiſt under treachery, ingratitude, malice, and infidelity, is immediately extinguiſhed by it, when perceived and acknowledged; nor are deformity and old age more fatal to the dominion of that paſſion. So dreadful are the ideas of an utter incapacity for any purpoſe or undertaking, and of continued error and miſconduct in life!

When it is aſked, whether a quick or a ſlow apprehenſion be moſt valuable? whether one that, at firſt view, penetrates far into a ſubject, but can perform nothing upon ſtudy; or a contrary character, which muſt work out every thing by dint of application? whether a clear head or a copious invention? whether a profound genius or a ſure judgment? in, ſhort, what character or peculiar turn of underſtanding is more excellent than another? It is evident, that we can

* Lib. xvii. cap. 35.

can anſwer none of theſe queſtions, without conſidering which of thoſe qualities capacitates a man beſt for the world, and carries him fartheſt in any undertaking.

If refined ſenſe and exalted ſenſe be not ſo uſeful as common ſenſe, their rarity, their novelty, and the nobleneſs of their objects, make ſome compenſation, and render them the admiration of mankind: As gold, though leſs ſerviceable than iron, acquires, from its ſcarcity, a value which is much ſuperior.

The defects of judgment can be ſupplied by no art or invention; but thoſe of MEMORY frequently may, both in buſineſs and in ſtudy, by method and induſtry, and by diligence in committing every thing to writing; and we ſcarcely ever hear a ſhort memory given as a reaſon for a man's failure in any undertaking. But in ancient times, when no man could make a figure without the talent of ſpeaking, and when the audience were too delicate to bear ſuch crude, undigeſted harangues as our extemporary orators offer to public aſſemblies; the faculty of memory was then of the utmoſt conſequence, and was accordingly much more valued than at preſent. Scarce any great genius is mentioned in antiquity, who is not celebrated for this talent; and Cicero enumerates it among the other ſublime qualities of Cæſar himſelf *.

Particular cuſtoms and manners alter the uſefulneſs of qualities: They alſo alter their merit. Particular ſituations and accidents have, in ſome degree, the ſame influence. He will always be more eſteemed, who poſſeſſes thoſe talents and accompliſhments, which ſuit his ſtation and profeſſion, than he whom fortune

* Fuit in illo ingenium, ratio, memoria, literæ, cura, cogitatio, diligentia, &c. PHILIP. 2.

has miſplaced in the part which ſhe has aſſigned him. The private or ſelfiſh virtues are, in this reſpect, more arbitrary than the public and ſocial. In other reſpects, they are, perhaps, leſs liable to doubt and controverſy.

In this kingdom, ſuch continued oſtentation, of late years, has prevailed among men in active life with regard to public ſpirit, and among thoſe in ſpeculative with regard to benevolence; and ſo many falſe pretenſions to each have been, no doubt, detected, that men of the world are apt, without any bad intention, to diſcover a ſullen incredulity on the head of thoſe moral endowments, and even ſometimes abſolutely to deny their exiſtence and reality. In like manner, I find, that of old, the perpetual cant of the Stoics and Cynics concerning virtue, their magnificent profeſſions, and ſlender performances, bred a diſguſt in mankind; and Lucian, who, though licentious with regard to pleaſure, is yet, in other reſpects, a very moral writer, cannot, ſometimes, talk of virtue, ſo much boaſted, without betraying ſymptoms of ſpleen and irony*. But ſurely this peeviſh delicacy, whence-ever it ariſes, can never be carried ſo far as to make us deny the exiſtence of every ſpecies of merit, and all diſtinction of manners and behaviour. Beſides diſcretion, caution, enterpriſe, induſtry, aſſiduity, frugality, œconomy, good ſenſe, prudence, diſcernment; beſides theſe endowments, I ſay, whoſe very names force an avowal of their merit, there are many others, to which the moſt determined ſcepticiſm cannot, for a moment, refuſe the tribute of praiſe

* Αρετην τινα και ασωματα και λογους μεγαλη τη φωνη ξυνειροντων. LUC. TIMON. Again, Και συναγαγοντες (οι φιλοσοφοι) ευιξαπατητα μειρακια τινες πολυδρυλλητον αρετην τραγωδουσι. ICURO-MEN. In another place, Ηπα γαρ εστιν η πολυδρυλλητος αρετη, ὴ φυσις, ὴ ειμαρμενη, ὴ τυχη, αιγλος ατα ὴ κενα φραγματων ονοματα. Deor. Concil.

praiſe and approbation. Temperance, ſobriety, patience, conſtancy, perſeverance, forethought, conſiderateneſs, ſecrecy, order, inſinuation, addreſs, preſence of mind, quickneſs of conception, facility of expreſſion; theſe, and a thouſand more of the ſame kind, no man will ever deny to be excellencies and perfections. As their merit conſiſts in their tendency to ſerve the perſon poſſeſſed of them, without any magnificent claim to public and ſocial deſert, we are the leſs jealous of their pretenſions, and readily admit them into the catalogue of laudable qualities. We are not ſenſible that, by this conceſſion, we have paved the way for all the other moral excellencies, and cannot conſiſtently heſitate any longer with regard to diſintereſted benevolence, patriotiſm, and humanity.

It ſeems indeed certain, that firſt appearances are here, as uſual, extremely deceitful, and that it is more difficult, in a ſpeculative way, to reſolve into ſelf-love the merit which we aſcribe to the ſelfiſh virtues above mentioned, than that even of the ſocial virtues, juſtice and beneficence. For this latter purpoſe, we need but ſay, that whatever conduct promotes the good of the community, is loved, praiſed, and eſteemed by the community, on account of that utility and intereſt of which every one partakes: And though this affection and regard be in reality gratitude, not ſelf-love, yet a diſtinction, even of this obvious nature, may not readily be made by ſuperficial reaſoners; and there is room at leaſt to ſupport the cavil and diſpute for a moment. But as qualities, which tend only to the utility of their poſſeſſor, without any reference to us, or to the community, are yet eſteemed and valued; by what theory or ſyſtem can we account for this ſentiment from ſelf-love, or deduce it from that favourite origin?

There ſeems here a neceſſity for confeſſing, that the happineſs and miſery of others are not ſpectacles entirely indifferent to us; but that the view of the former, whether in its cauſes or effects, like ſunſhine, or the proſpect of well-cultivated plains (to carry our pretenſions no higher), communicates a ſecret joy and ſatisfaction; the appearance of the latter, like a lowering cloud or barren landſkip, throws a melancholy damp over the imagination. And this conceſſion being once made, the difficulty is over; and a natural unforced interpretation of the phænomena of human life will afterwards, we may hope, prevail among all ſpeculative inquirers.

PART II.

It may not be improper, in this place, to examine the influence of bodily endowments, and of the goods of fortune, over our ſentiments of regard and eſteem, and to conſider whether theſe phænomena fortify or weaken the preſent theory. It will naturally be expected, that the beauty of the body, as is ſuppoſed by all ancient moraliſts, will be ſimilar, in ſome reſpects, to that of the mind; and that every kind of eſteem which is paid to a man, will have ſomething ſimilar in its origin, whether it ariſe from his mental endowments, or from the ſituation of his exterior circumſtances.

It is evident, that one conſiderable ſource of beauty in all animals, is the advantage which they reap from the particular ſtructure of their limbs and members, ſuitably to the particular manner of life to which they are by nature deſtined. The juſt proportions of a horſe, deſcribed by Xenophon and Virgil, are the ſame that

that are received at this day by our modern jockeys; becauſe the foundation of them is the ſame, namely, experience of what is detrimental or uſeful to the animal.

Broad ſhoulders, a lank belly, firm joints, taper legs; all theſe are beautiful in our ſpecies, becauſe ſigns of force and vigour. Ideas of utility, and its contrary, though they do not entirely determine what is handſome or deformed, are evidently the ſource of a conſiderable part of approbation or diſlike.

In ancient times, bodily ſtrength and dexterity being of greater uſe and importance in war, was alſo much more eſteemed and valued than at preſent. Not to inſiſt on Homer and the poets, we may obſerve, that hiſtorians ſcruple not to mention force of body among the other accompliſhments, even of Epaminondas, whom they acknowledge to be the greateſt hero, ſtateſman, and general, of all the Greeks *. A like praiſe is given to Pompey, one of the greateſt of the Romans †. This inſtance is ſimilar to what we obſerved above with regard to memory.

What deriſion and contempt, with both ſexes, attend impotence; while the unhappy object is regarded as one deprived of ſo capital a pleaſure in life, and at the ſame time as diſabled from communicating it to others. Barrenneſs in women, being alſo a ſpecies of inutility, is a reproach, but not in the ſame degree: Of which the reaſon is very obvious, according to the preſent theory.

There is no rule in painting or ſtatuary more indiſpenſable than that of balancing the figures, and placing them

* See Note [GG].

† Cum alacribus, ſaltu; cum velocibus, curſu; cum validis rèctè certabat. SALLUST. apud VEGET.

them with the greateſt exactneſs on their proper centre of gravity. A figure, which is not juſtly balanced, is ugly; becauſe it conveys the diſagreeable ideas of fall, harm, and pain *.

A diſpoſition or turn of mind, which qualifies a man to riſe in the world, and advance his fortune, is entitled to eſteem and regard, as has already been explained. It may, therefore, naturally be ſuppoſed, that the actual poſſeſſion of riches and authority will have a conſiderable influence over theſe ſentiments.

Let us examine any hypotheſis, by which we can account for the regard paid to the rich and powerful; we ſhall find none ſatisfactory but that which derives it from the enjoyment communicated to the ſpectator by the images of proſperity, happineſs, eaſe, plenty, authority, and the gratification of every appetite. Self-love, for inſtance, which ſome affect ſo much to conſider as the ſource of every ſentiment, is plainly inſufficient for this purpoſe. Where no good-will or friendſhip appears, it is difficult to conceive on what we can found our hope of advantage from the riches of others; though we naturally reſpect the rich, even before they diſcover any ſuch favourable diſpoſition towards us.

We are affected with the ſame ſentiments, when we lie ſo much out of the ſphere of their activity, that they cannot even be ſuppoſed to poſſeſs the power of ſerving us. A priſoner of war, in all civilized nations, is treated with a regard ſuited to his condition; and riches, it is evident, go far towards fixing the condition of any perſon. If birth and quality enter for a ſhare, this ſtill affords us an argument to our preſent purpoſe. For what is it we call a man of birth, but one who is deſcended

* See Note [HH].

deſcended from a long ſucceſſion of rich and powerful anceſtors, and who acquires our eſteem by his connection with perſons whom we eſteem? His anceſtors, therefore, though dead, are reſpected, in ſome meaſure, on account of their riches; and conſequently without any kind of expectation.

But not to go ſo far as priſoners of war, or the dead, to find inſtances of this diſintereſted regard for riches; we may only obſerve, with a little attention, thoſe phænomena which occur in common life and converſation. A man who is himſelf, we ſhall ſuppoſe, of a competent fortune, and of no profeſſion, being introduced to a company of ſtrangers, naturally treats them with different degrees of reſpect, as he is informed of their different fortunes and conditions; though it is impoſſible that he can ſo ſuddenly propoſe, and perhaps he would not accept of, any pecuniary advantage from them. A traveller is always admitted into company, and meets with civility, in proportion as his train and equipage ſpeak him a man of great or moderate fortune. In ſhort, the different ranks of men are, in a great meaſure, regulated by riches; and that with regard to ſuperiors as well as inferiors, ſtrangers as well as acquaintance.

What remains, therefore, but to conclude, that, as riches are deſired for ourſelves only as the means of gratifying our appetites, either at preſent or in ſome imaginary future period, they beget eſteem in others merely from their having that influence. This indeed is their very nature or eſſence: They have a direct reference to the commodities, conveniencies, and pleaſures of life: The bill of a banker who is broke, or gold in a deſert iſland, would otherwiſe be full as valuable. When we approach a man who is, as we ſay,

at

at his eaſe, we are preſented with the pleaſing ideas of plenty, ſatisfaction, cleanlineſs, warmth; a cheerful houſe, elegant furniture, ready ſervice, and whatever is deſirable in meat, drink, or apparel. On the contrary, when a poor man appears, the diſagreeable images of want, penury, hard labour, dirty furniture, coarſe or ragged clothes, nauſeous meat and diſtaſteful liquor, immediately ſtrike our fancy. What elſe do we mean by ſaying that one is rich, the other poor? And as regard or contempt is the natural conſequence of thoſe different ſituations in life, it is eaſily ſeen what additional light and evidence this throws on our preceding theory, with regard to all moral diſtinctions *.

A man who has cured himſelf of all ridiculous prepoſſeſſions, and is fully, ſincerely, and ſteadily convinced, from experience as well as philoſophy, that the difference of fortune makes leſs difference in happineſs than is vulgarly imagined; ſuch a one does not meaſure out degrees of eſteem according to the rent-rolls of his acquaintance. He may, indeed, externally pay a ſuperior deference to the great lord above the vaſſal; becauſe riches are the moſt convenient, being the moſt fixed and determinate, ſource of diſtinction: But his internal ſentiments are more regulated by the perſonal characters of men, than by the accidental and capricious favours of fortune.

In moſt countries of Europe, family, that is, hereditary riches, marked with titles and ſymbols from the ſovereign, is the chief ſource of diſtinction. In England, more regard is paid to preſent opulence and plenty. Each practice has its advantages and diſadvantages. Where birth is reſpected, unactive, ſpiritleſs minds remain in haughty indolence, and dream of

* See Note [II.]

of nothing but pedigrees and genealogies: The generous and ambitious ſeek honour and authority, and reputation and favour. Where riches are the chief idol, corruption, venality, rapine prevail: Arts, manufactures, commerce, agriculture flouriſh: The former prejudice, being favourable to military virtue, is more ſuited to monarchies. The latter, being the chief ſpur to induſtry, agrees better with a republican government. And we accordingly find, that each of theſe forms of government, by varying the utility of thoſe cuſtoms, has commonly a proportionable effect on the ſentiments of mankind.

SECTION VII.

Of Qualities immediately agreeable to Ourſelves.

WHOEVER has paſſed an evening with ſerious melancholy people, and has obſerved how ſuddenly the converſation was animated, and what ſprightlineſs diffuſed itſelf over the countenance, diſcourſe, and behaviour of every one, on the acceſſion of a good-humoured, lively companion; ſuch a one will eaſily allow, that CHEERFULNESS carries great merit with it, and naturally conciliates the good-will of mankind. No quality, indeed, more readily communicates itſelf to all around; becauſe no one has a greater propenſity to diſplay itſelf, in jovial talk and pleaſant entertainment. The flame ſpreads through the whole circle; and the moſt ſullen and moroſe are often

often caught by it. That the melancholy hate the merry, even though Horace ſays it, I have ſome difficulty to allow; becauſe I have always obſerved, that, where the jollity is moderate and decent, ſerious people are ſo much the more delighted, as it diſſipates the gloom with which they are commonly oppreſſed; and gives them an unuſual enjoyment.

From this influence of cheerfulneſs, both to communicate itſelf, and to engage approbation, we may perceive, that there is another ſet of mental qualities, which, without any utility or any tendency to farther good, either of the community or of the poſſeſſor, diffuſe a ſatisfaction on the beholders, and procure friendſhip and regard. Their immediate ſenſation, to the perſon poſſeſſed of them, is agreeable: Others enter into the ſame humour, and catch the ſentiment, by a contagion or natural ſympathy: And as we cannot forbear loving whatever pleaſes, a kindly emotion ariſes towards the perſon who communicates ſo much ſatisfaction. He is a more animating ſpectacle: His preſence diffuſes over us more ſerene complacency and enjoyment: Our imagination, entering into his feelings and diſpoſition, is affected in a more agreeable manner, than if a melancholy, dejected, ſullen, anxious temper were preſented to us. Hence the affection and approbation, which attend the former; the averſion and diſguſt, with which we regard the latter *.

Few men would envy the character which Cæſar gives of Caſſius.

> ——————— He loves no play,
> As thou do'ſt, Anthony: He hears no muſic:
> Seldom he ſmiles; and ſmiles in ſuch a ſort,
> As if he mock'd himſelf, and ſcorn'd his ſpirit
> That could be mov'd to ſmile at any thing.

Not

* See Note [KK].

Not only ſuch men, as Cæſar adds, are commonly dangerous, but alſo, having little enjoyment within themſelves, they can never become agreeable to others, or contribute to ſocial entertainment. In all polite nations and ages, a reliſh for pleaſure, if accompanied with temperance and decency, is eſteemed a conſiderable merit, even in the greateſt men; and becomes ſtill more requiſite in thoſe of inferior rank and character. It is an agreeable repreſentation, which a French writer gives of the ſituation of his own mind in this particular. "Virtue I love," ſays he, "without auſterity: Pleaſure, without effeminacy: And life, without fearing its end *."

Who is not ſtruck with any ſignal inſtance of GREATNESS of MIND or dignity of character; with elevation of ſentiment, diſdain of ſlavery, and with that noble pride and ſpirit, which ariſes from conſcious virtue? The ſublime, ſays Longinus, is often nothing but the echo or image of magnanimity; and where this quality appears in any one, even though a ſyllable be not uttered, it excites our applauſe and admiration; as may be obſerved of the famous ſilence of Ajax in the Odyſſey, which expreſſes more noble diſdain and reſolute indignation, than any language can convey †.

"Were I Alexander," ſaid Parmenio, "I would accept of theſe offers made by Darius." "So would I too," replied Alexander, "were I Parmenio." This ſaying is admirable, ſays Longinus, from a like principle ‡.

"Go!"

* "J'aime la vertu, ſans rudeſſe;
"J'aime le plaiſir, ſans moleſſe;
"J'aime la vie, & n'en crains point la fin." St. EVREMOND.

† Cap. 9. ‡ Idem.

"Go!" ſaid the ſame hero to his ſoldiers, when they refuſed to follow him to the Indies; "go tell your countrymen, that you left Alexander completing the conqueſt of the world." "Alexander" ſaid the Prince of Conde, who always admired this paſſage, "abandoned by his ſoldiers, among Barbarians not "yet fully ſubdued, felt in himſelf ſuch a dignity and "right of empire, that he could not believe it poſſi-"ble that any one would refuſe to obey him. Whe-"ther in Europe, or in Aſia, among Greeks or Per-"ſians, all was indifferent to him: Wherever he "found men, he fancied he ſhould find ſubjects."

The confident of Medea in the tragedy, recommends caution and ſubmiſſions; and enumerating all the diſtreſſes of that unfortunate heroine, aſks her, what ſhe has to ſupport her againſt her numerous and implacable enemies? "Myſelf," replies ſhe; "Myſelf, I ſay, and it is enough." Boileau juſtly recommends this paſſage as an inſtance of true ſublime *.

When Phocion, the modeſt, the gentle Phocion, was led to execution, he turned to one of his fellow-ſufferers, who was lamenting his own hard fate: "Is it not glory enough for you," ſays he, "that you die with Phocion †?"

Place in oppoſition the picture which Tacitus draws of Vitellius, fallen from empire, prolonging his ignominy from a wretched love of life, delivered over to the mercileſs rabble; toſſed, buffeted, and kicked about; conſtrained, by their holding a poniard under his chin, to raiſe his head, and expoſe himſelf to every contumely. What abject infamy! What low humiliation! Yet even here, ſays the hiſtorian, he diſcovered ſome ſymptoms of a mind not wholly degenerate.

* Reflexion 10 ſur Longin. † Plutarch in Phoc.

generate. To a tribune, who inſulted him, he replied, "I am ſtill your Emperor ‡."

We never excuſe the abſolute want of ſpirit and dignity of character, or a proper ſenſe of what is due to one's ſelf, in ſociety and the common intercourſe of life. This vice conſtitutes what we properly call Meanneſs; when a man can ſubmit to the baſeſt ſlavery, in order to gain his ends; fawn upon thoſe who abuſe him; and degrade himſelf by intimacies and familiarities with undeſerving inferiors. A certain degree of generous pride or ſelf-value is ſo requiſite, that the abſence of it in the mind diſpleaſes, after the ſame manner as the want of a noſe, eye, or any of the moſt material features of the face, or members of the body ‖.

The utility of COURAGE, both to the public and to and to the perſon poſſeſſed of it, is an obvious foundation of merit: But to any one who duly conſiders of the matter, it will appear, that this quality has a peculiar luſtre, which it derives wholly from itſelf, and from that noble elevation inſeparable from it. Its figure, drawn by painters and by poets, diſplays, in each feature, a ſublimity and daring confidence; which catches the eye, engages the affections, and diffuſes, by ſympathy, a like ſublimity of ſentiment over every ſpectator.

Under what ſhining colours does Demoſthenes * repreſent Philip, where the orator apologizes for his own adminiſtration, and juſtifies that pertinacious love of liberty with which he had inſpired the Athenians: "I beheld Philip," ſays he, "he with whom was "your conteſt, reſolutely, while in purſuit of empire "and

‡ See Note [LL.]

‖ See Note [MM.]

* Pro corona.

" and dominion, expoſing himſelf to every wound; " his eye gored, his neck wreſted, his arm, his " thigh, pierced; whatever part of his body fortune " ſhould ſeize on, that cheerfully relinquiſhing; pro- " vided that, with what remained, he might live in " honour and renown. And ſhall it be ſaid, that he, " born in Pella, a place heretofore mean and ignoble, " ſhould be inſpired with ſo high an ambition and " thirſt of fame; while you, Athenians," &c. Theſe praiſes excite the moſt lively admiration; but the views preſented by the orator, carry us not, we ſee, beyond the hero himſelf, nor ever regard the future advantageous conſequences of his valour.

The martial temper of the Romans, inflamed by continual wars, had raiſed their eſteem of courage ſo high, that, in their language, it was called Virtue, by way of excellence and of diſtinction from all other moral qualities. " The Suevi," in the opinion of Tacitus *, " dreſſed their hair with a laudable intent: Not for the purpoſe of loving, or being loved: They adorned themſelves only for their enemies, and in order to appear more terrible." A ſentiment of the hiſtorian, which would ſound a little oddly in other nations and other ages.

The Scythians, according to Herodotus †, after ſcalping their enemies, dreſſed the ſkin like leather, and uſed it as a towel; and whoever had the moſt of thoſe towels was moſt eſteemed among them. So much had martial bravery, in that nation, as well as in many others, deſtroyed the ſentiments of humanity; a virtue ſurely much more uſeful and engaging.

It is indeed obſervable, that, among all uncultivated nations, who have not as yet had full experience of

* De moribus Germ. † Lib. iv.

of the advantages attending beneficence, juſtice, and the ſocial virtues, courage is the predominant excellence; what is moſt celebrated by poets, recommended by parents and inſtructors, and admired by the public in general. The ethics of Homer are, in this particular, very different from thoſe of Fenelon, his elegant imitator; and ſuch as were well ſuited to an age, when one hero, as remarked by Thucydides *, could aſk another, without offence, whether he were a robber or not. Such alſo, very lately, was the ſyſtem of ethics which prevailed in many barbarous parts of Ireland; if we may credit Spencer, in his judicious account of the ſtate of that kingdom †.

Of the ſame claſs of virtues with courage is that undiſturbed philoſophical TRANQUILLITY, ſuperior to pain, ſorrow, anxiety, and each aſſault of adverſe fortune. Conſcious of his own virtue, ſay the philoſophers, the ſage elevates himſelf above every accident of life; and, ſecurely placed in the temple of wiſdom, looks down on inferior mortals, engaged in purſuit of honours, riches, reputation, and every frivolous enjoyment. Theſe pretenſions, no doubt, when ſtretched to the utmoſt, are by far too magnificent for human nature. They carry, however, a grandeur with them, which ſeizes the ſpectator, and ſtrikes him with admiration. And the nearer we can approach in prac-

* Lib. i.

† It is a common uſe, ſays he, amongſt their gentlemens ſons, that, as ſoon as they are able to uſe their weapons, they ſtrait gather to themſelves three or four ſtragglers or kern, with whom wandering a while up and down idly the country, taking only meat, he at laſt falleth into ſome bad occaſion that ſhall be offered; which being once made known, he is thenceforth counted a man of worth, in whom there is courage.

tice to this ſublime tranquillity and indifference (for we muſt diſtinguiſh it from a ſtupid inſenſibility), the more ſecure enjoyment ſhall we attain within ourſelves, and the more greatneſs of mind ſhall we diſcover to the world. The philoſophical tranquillity may, indeed, be conſidered only as a branch of magnanimity.

Who admires not Socrates; his perpetual ſerenity and contentment, amidſt the greateſt poverty and domeſtic vexations; his reſolute contempt of riches, and his magnanimous care of preſerving liberty, while he refuſed all aſſiſtance from his friends and diſciples, and avoided even the dependence of an obligation? Epictetus had not ſo much as a door to his little houſe or hovel; and therefore ſoon loſt his iron lamp, the only furniture which he had worth taking. But reſolving to diſappoint all robbers for the future, he ſupplied its place with an earthen lamp, of which he very peaceably kept poſſeſſion ever after.

Among the ancients, the heroes in philoſophy, as well as thoſe in war and patriotiſm, have a grandeur and force of ſentiment, which aſtoniſhes our narrow ſouls, and is raſhly rejected as extravagant and ſupernatural. They, in their turn, I allow, would have had equal reaſon to conſider as romantic and incredible, the degree of humanity, clemency, order, tranquillity, and other ſocial virtues, to which, in the adminiſtration of government, we have attained in modern times, had any one been then able to have made a fair repreſentation of them. Such is the compenſation, which nature, or rather education, has made in the diſtribution of excellencies and virtues in thoſe different ages.

The merit of BENEVOLENCE, ariſing from its utility, and its tendency to promote the good of mankind, has

has been already explained, and is, no doubt, the ſource of a conſiderable part of that eſteem which is ſo univerſally paid to it. But it will alſo be allowed, that the very ſoftneſs and tenderneſs of the ſentiment, its engaging endearments, its fond expreſſions, its delicate attentions, and all that flow of mutual confidence and regard which enters into a warm attachment of love and friendſhip; It will be allowed, I ſay, that theſe feelings, being delightful in themſelves, are neceſſarily communicated to the ſpectators, and melt them into the ſame fondneſs and delicacy. The tear naturally ſtarts in our eye on the apprehenſion of a warm ſentiment of this nature: Our breaſt heaves, our heart is agitated, and every humane tender principle of our frame is ſet in motion, and gives us the pureſt and moſt ſatisfactory enjoyment.

When poets form deſcriptions of Elyſian fields, where the bleſſed inhabitants ſtand in no need of each other's aſſiſtance, they yet repreſent them as maintaining a conſtant intercourſe of love and friendſhip, and ſooth our fancy with the pleaſing image of theſe ſoft and gentle paſſions. The idea of tender tranquillity in a paſtoral Arcadia, is agreeable from a like principle, as has been obſerved above *.

Who would live amidſt perpetual wrangling, and ſcolding, and mutual reproaches? The roughneſs and harſhneſs of theſe emotions diſturb and diſpleaſe us: we ſuffer by contagion and ſympathy; nor can we remain indifferent ſpectators, even though certain that no pernicious conſequences would ever follow from ſuch angry paſſions.

As a certain proof that the whole merit of benevolence is not derived from its uſefulneſs, we may obſerve,

* Sect. V. Part 2.

ſerve, that, in a kind of blame, we ſay, a perſon is "too good," when he exceeds his part in ſociety, and carries his attention for others beyond the proper bounds. In like manner, we ſay a man is "too high-ſpirited, too intrepid, too indifferent about fortune:" Reproaches which really, at bottom, imply more eſteem than many panegyrics. Being accuſtomed to rate the merit and demerit of characters chiefly by their uſeful or pernicious tendencies, we cannot forbear applying the epithet of blame, when we diſcover a ſentiment which riſes to a degree that is hurtful: But it may happen, at the ſame time, that its noble elevation, or its engaging tenderneſs, ſo ſeizes the heart, as rather to increaſe our friendſhip and concern for the perſon *.

The amours and attachments of Harry the IVth of France, during the civil wars of the league, frequently hurt his intereſt and his cauſe; but all the young at leaſt, and amorous, who can ſympathize with the tender paſſions, will allow, that this very weakneſs (for they will readily call it ſuch) chiefly endears that hero, and intereſts them in his fortunes.

The exceſſive bravery and reſolute inflexibility of Charles the XIIth ruined his own country, and infeſted all his neighbours; but have ſuch ſplendour and greatneſs in their appearance, as ſtrike us with admiration; and they might, in ſome degree, be even approved of, if they betrayed not ſometimes too evident ſymptoms of madneſs and diſorder.

The

* Cheerfulneſs could ſcarce admit of blame from its exceſs, were it not, that diſſolute mirth, without a proper cauſe or ſubject, is a ſure ſymptom and characteriſtic of folly, and on that account diſguſtful.

The Athenians pretended to the firſt invention of agriculture and of laws; and always valued themſelves extremely on the benefit thereby procured to the whole race of mankind. They alſo boaſted, and with reaſon, of their warlike enterprizes; particularly againſt thoſe innumerable fleets and armies of Perſians, which invaded Greece during the reigns of Darius and Xerxes. But though there be no compariſon, in point of utility, between theſe peaceful and military honours; yet we find, that the orators, who have wrote ſuch elaborate panegyrics on that famous city, have chiefly triumphed in diſplaying the warlike achievements. Lyſias, Thucydides, Plato, and Iſocrates, diſcover, all of them, the ſame partiality; which, though condemned by calm reaſon and reflection, appears ſo natural in the mind of man.

It is obſervable, that the great charm of poetry conſiſts in lively pictures of the ſublime paſſions, magnanimity, courage, diſdain of fortune; or thoſe of the tender affections, love and friendſhip; which warm the heart, and diffuſe over it ſimilar ſentiments and emotions. And though all kinds of paſſion, even the moſt diſagreeable, ſuch as grief and anger, are obſerved, when excited by poetry, to convey a ſatisfaction, from a mechaniſm of nature, not eaſy to be explained: Yet thoſe more elevated or ſofter affections have a peculiar influence, and pleaſe from more than one cauſe or principle. Not to mention, that they alone intereſt us in the fortune of the perſons repreſented, or communicate any eſteem and affection for their character.

And can it poſſibly be doubted, that this talent itſelf of poets to move the paſſions, this PATHETIC and SUBLIME of ſentiment, is a very conſiderable merit; and being enhanced by its extreme rarity, may exalt

the perſon poſſeſſed of it above every character of the age in which he lives? The prudence, addreſs ſteadineſs, and benign government of Auguſtus, adorned with all the ſplendour of his noble birth and imperial crown, render him but an unequal competitor for fame with Virgil, who lays nothing into the oppoſite ſcale but the divine beauties of his poetical genius.

The very ſenſibility to theſe beauties, or a DELICACY of taſte, is itſelf a beauty in any character; as conveying the pureſt, the moſt durable, and moſt innocent of all enjoyments.

Theſe are ſome inſtances of the ſeveral ſpecies of merit, that are valued for the immediate pleaſure which they communicate to the perſon poſſeſſed of them. No views of utility, or of future beneficial conſequences, enter into this ſentiment of approbation; yet is it of a kind ſimilar to that other ſentiment, which ariſes from views of a public or private utility. The ſame ſocial ſympathy, we may obſerve, or fellow-feeling with human happineſs or miſery, gives riſe to both; and this analogy, in all the parts of the preſent theory, may juſtly be regarded as a confirmation of it.

SECT.

SECTION VIII.

Of Qualities immediately agreeable to Others *.

AS the mutual ſhocks, in ſociety, and the oppoſitions of intereſt and ſelf-love, have conſtrained mankind to eſtabliſh the laws of juſtice, in order to preſerve the advantages of mutual aſſiſtance and protection; in like manner, the eternal contrarieties, in company, of mens pride and ſelf-conceit, have introduced the rules of GOOD-MANNERS or POLITENESS, in order to facilitate the intercourſe of minds, and an undiſturbed commerce and converſation. Among well bred people, a mutual deference is affected; contempt of others diſguiſed; authority concealed; attention given to each in his turn; and an eaſy ſtream of converſation maintained, without vehemence, without interruption, without eagerneſs for victory, and without any airs of ſuperiority. Theſe attentions and regards are immediately agreeable to others, abſtracted from any conſideration of utility or beneficial tendencies: They conciliate affection, promote eſteem, and extremely

* It is the nature, and indeed the definition of virtue, that it is "a quality of the mind agreeable to, or approved of by every one, who conſiders or contemplates it." But ſome qualities produce pleaſure, becauſe they are uſeful to ſociety, or uſeful or agreeable to the perſon himſelf; others produce it more immediately: which is the caſe with the claſs of virtues here conſidered.

tremely enhance the merit of the perſon who regulates his behaviour by them.

Many of the forms of breeding are arbitrary and caſual: but the thing expreſſed by them is ſtill the ſame. A Spaniard goes out of his own houſe before his gueſt, to ſignify that he leaves him maſter of all. In other countries, the landlord walks out laſt, as a common mark of deference and regard.

But in order to render a man perfect good company, he muſt have WIT and INGENUITY, as well as good manners. What wit is, it may not be eaſy to define; but it is eaſy ſurely to determine, that it is a quality immediately agreeable to others, and communicating, on its firſt appearance, a lively joy and ſatisfaction to every one who has any comprehenſion of it. The moſt profound metaphyſics, indeed, might be employed, in explaining the various kinds and ſpecies of wit; and many claſſes of it, which are now received on the ſole teſtimony of taſte and ſentiment, might, perhaps, be reſolved into more general principles. But this is ſufficient for our preſent purpoſe, that it does affect taſte and ſentiment, and, beſtowing an immediate enjoyment, is a ſure ſource of approbation and affection.

In countries, where men paſs moſt of their time in converſation, and viſits, and aſſemblies, theſe companionable qualities, ſo to ſpeak, are of high eſtimation, and form a chief part of perſonal merit. In countries, where men live a more domeſtic life, and either are employed in buſineſs, or amuſe themſelves in a narrower circle of acquaintance, the more ſolid qualities are chiefly regarded. Thus I have often obſerved, that among the French, the firſt queſtions, with regard to a ſtranger, are, "Is he polite? Has he wit?" In our

our own country, the chief praiſe beſtowed, is always that of a "good-natured, ſenſible fellow."

In converſation, the lively ſpirit of dialogue is agreeable, even to thoſe who deſire not to have any ſhare in the diſcourſe. Hence the teller of long ſtories, or the pompous declaimer, is very little approved of. But moſt men deſire likewiſe their turn in the converſation; and regard, with a very evil eye, that loquacity which deprives them of a right they are naturally ſo jealous of.

There is a ſort of harmleſs liars, frequently to be met with in company, who deal much in the marvellous. Their uſual intention is to pleaſe and entertain; but as men are moſt delighted with what they conceive to be truth, theſe people miſtake extremely the means of pleaſing, and incur univerſal blame. Some indulgence, however, to lying or fiction, is given in humorous ſtories, becauſe it is there really agreeable and entertaining; and truth is not of any importance.

Eloquence, genius of all kinds, even good ſenſe and ſound reaſoning, when it riſes to an eminent degree, and is employed upon ſubjects of any conſiderable dignity and nice diſcernment; all theſe endowments ſeem immediately agreeable, and have a merit diſtinct from their uſefulneſs. Rarity, likewiſe, which ſo much enhances the price of every thing, muſt ſet an additional value on theſe noble talents of the human mind.

Modeſty may be underſtood in different ſenſes, even abſtracted from chaſtity, which has been already treated of. It ſometimes means that tenderneſs and nicety of honour, that apprehenſion of blame, that dread of intruſion or injury towards others, that *pudor*, which is the proper guardian of every kind of virtue, and a ſure preſervative againſt vice and corruption. But its moſt

moſt uſual meaning is when it is oppoſed to impudence and arrogance, and expreſſes a diffidence of our own judgment, and a due attention and regard for others. In young men chiefly, this quality is a ſure ſign of good ſenſe; and is alſo the certain means of augmenting that endowment, by preſerving their ears open to inſtruction, and making them ſtill graſp after new attainments. But it has a farther charm to every ſpectator, by flattering every man's vanity, and preſenting the appearance of a docile pupil, who receives, with proper attention and reſpect, every word they utter.

Men have, in general, a much greater propenſity to overvalue than to undervalue themſelves; notwithſtanding the opinion of Ariſtotle *. This makes us more jealous of the exceſs on the former ſide, and cauſes us to regard, with a peculiar indulgence, all tendency to modeſty and ſelf-diffidence; as eſteeming the danger leſs of falling into any vicious extreme of that nature. It is thus in countries where mens bodies are apt to exceed in corpulency, perſonal beauty is placed in a much greater degree of ſlenderneſs, than in countries where that is the moſt uſual defect. Being ſo often ſtruck with inſtances of one ſpecies of deformity, men think they can never keep at too great a diſtance from it, and wiſh always to have a leaning to the oppoſite ſide. In like manner, were the door opened to ſelf-praiſe, and were Montaigne's maxim obſerved, that one ſhould ſay as frankly, "I have ſenſe, I have learning, I have courage, beauty, or wit," as it is ſure we often think ſo; were this the caſe, I ſay, every one is ſenſible, that ſuch a flood of impertinence would break in upon us, as would render ſociety wholly intolerable. For this reaſon, cuſtom has eſtabliſhed

* Ethic, ad Nicomachum.

eſtabliſhed it as a rule, in common ſocieties, that men ſhould not indulge themſelves in ſelf-praiſe, or even ſpeak much of themſelves; and it is only among intimate friends or people of very manly behaviour, that one is allowed to do himſelf juſtice. No body finds fault with Maurice, Prince of Orange, for his reply to one who aſked him, whom he eſteemed the firſt general of the age? "The Marquis of Spinola," ſaid he, "is the ſecond." Though it is obſervable, that the ſelf-praiſe implied, is here better implied, than if it had been directly expreſſed without any cover or diſguiſe.

He muſt be a very ſuperficial thinker who imagines, that all inſtances of mutual deference are to be underſtood in earneſt, and that a man would be more eſtimable for being ignorant of his own merits and accompliſhments. A ſmall bias towards modeſty, even in the internal ſentiment, is favourably regarded, eſpecially in young people; and a ſtrong bias is required in the outward behaviour: But this excludes not a noble pride and ſpirit, which may openly diſplay itſelf in its full extent, when one lies under calumny or oppreſſion of any kind. The generous contumacy of Socrates, as Cicero calls it, has been highly celebrated in all ages; and when joined to the uſual modeſty of his behaviour, forms a ſhining character. Iphicrates, the Athenian, being accuſed of betraying the intereſts of his country, aſked his accuſer, "Would you," ſays he, "have, on a like occaſion, been guilty of that crime?" "By no means," replied the other. "And can you then imagine," cried the hero, "that Iphicrates would be guilty*?" In ſhort, a generous ſpirit, and ſelf-value well founded, decently diſguiſed, and courageouſly ſupported under diſtreſs and calumny, is a great excellency, and

* Quinctil. lib. v. cap. 12.

and ſeems to derive its merit from the noble elevation of its ſentiment, or its immediate agreeableneſs to its poſſeſſor. In ordinary characters, we approve of a bias towards modeſty, which is a quality immediately agreeable to others: The vicious exceſs of the former virtue, namely, inſolence or haughtineſs, is immediately diſagreeable to others: The exceſs of the latter is ſo to the poſſeſſor. Thus are the boundaries of theſe duties adjuſted.

A deſire of fame, reputation, or a character with others, is ſo far from being blameable, that it ſeems inſeparable from virtue, genius, capacity, and a generous or noble diſpoſition. An attention, even to trivial matters, in order to pleaſe, is alſo expected and demanded by ſociety; and no one is ſurpriſed, if he find a man in company, to obſerve a greater elegance of dreſs, and more pleaſant flow of converſation, than when he paſſes his time at home, and with his own family. Wherein, then, conſiſts VANITY, which is ſo juſtly regarded as a fault or imperfection? It ſeems to conſiſt chiefly in ſuch an intemperate diſplay of our advantages, honours, and accompliſhments; in ſuch an importunate and open demand of praiſe and admiration, as is offenſive to others, and encroaches too far on their ſecret vanity and ambition. It is beſides a ſure ſymptom of the want of true dignity and elevation of mind, which is ſo great an ornament in any character. For, why that impatient deſire of applauſe, as if you were not juſtly entitled to it, and might not reaſonably expect that it would for ever attend you? Why ſo anxious to inform us of the great company which you have kept; the obliging things which were ſaid to you; the honours, the diſtinctions which you met with; as if theſe were not things of courſe, and what we could readily,

readily, of ourſelves, have imagined, without being told of them?

DECENCY, or a proper regard to age, ſex, character, and ſtation in the world, may be ranked among the qualities, which are immediately agreeable to others, and which, by that means, acquire praiſe and approbation. An effeminate behaviour in a man, a rough manner in a woman; theſe are ugly, becauſe unſuitable to each character, and different from the qualities which we expect in the ſexes. It is as if a tragedy abounded in comic beauties, or a comedy in tragic. The diſproportions hurt the eye, and convey a diſagreeable ſentiment to the ſpectators, the ſource of blame and diſapprobation. This is that indecorum which is explained ſo much at large by Cicero in his Offices.

Among the other virtues, we may alſo give CLEANLINESS a place; ſince it naturally renders us agreeable to others, and is no inconſiderable ſource of love and affection. No one will deny, that a negligence in this particular is a fault; and as faults are nothing but ſmaller vices, and this fault can have no other origin than the uneaſy ſenſation which it excites in others; we may, in this inſtance, ſeemingly ſo trivial, clearly diſcover the origin of moral diſtinctions, about which the learned have involved themſelves in ſuch mazes of perplexity and error.

But beſides all the agreeable qualities, the origin of whoſe beauty we can in ſome degree explain and account for, there ſtill remains ſomething myſterious and inexplicable, which conveys an immediate ſatisfaction to the ſpectator; but how, or why, or for what reaſon, he cannot pretend to determine. There is a MANNER, a grace, an eaſe, a genteelneſs, an I-know-not-what, which ſome men poſſeſs above others, which is very different

different from external beauty and comelineſs, and which, however, catches our affection almoſt as ſuddenly and powerfully. And though this manner be chiefly talked of in the paſſion between the ſexes, where the concealed magic is eaſily explained, yet ſurely much of it prevails in all our eſtimation of characters, and forms no inconſiderable part of perſonal merit. This claſs of accompliſhments, therefore, muſt be truſted entirely to the blind but ſure teſtimony of taſte and ſentiment; and muſt be conſidered as a part of ethics, left by nature to baffle all the pride of philoſophy, and make her ſenſible of her narrow boundaries and ſlender acquiſitions.

We approve of another, becauſe of his wit, politeneſs, modeſty, decency, or any agreeable quality which he poſſeſſes; although he be not of our acquaintance, nor has ever given us any entertainment by means of theſe accompliſhments. The idea which we form of their effect on his acquaintance, has an agreeable influence on our imagination, and gives us the ſentiment of approbation. This principle enters into all the judgments which we form concerning manners and characters.

SEC-

SECTION IX.

Concluſion.

PART I.

IT may juſtly appear ſurpriſing, that any man, in ſo late an age, ſhould find it requiſite to prove by elaborate reaſoning; that PERSONAL MERIT conſiſts altogether in the poſſeſſion of mental qualities uſeful or agreeable to the perſon himſelf, or to others. It might be expected, that this principle would have occurred, even to the firſt rude, unpractiſed inquirers concerning morals, and been received from its own evidence, without any argument or diſputation. Whatever is valuable in any kind, ſo naturally claſſes itſelf under the diviſion of uſeful or agreeable, the *utile* or the *dulce*, that it is not eaſy to imagine, why we ſhould ever ſeek farther, or conſider the queſtion as a matter of nice reſearch or inquiry. And as every thing uſeful or agreeable muſt poſſeſs theſe qualities, with regard either to the perſon himſelf or to others, the complete delineation or deſcription of merit ſeems to be performed as naturally as a ſhadow is caſt by the ſun, or an image is reflected upon water. If the ground, on which the ſhadow is caſt, be not broken and uneven, nor the ſurface, from which the image is reflected, diſturbed and confuſed; a juſt figure is immediately preſented, without any art or attention. And it ſeems

a reaſonable preſumption, that ſyſtems and hypotheſes have perverted our natural underſtanding; when a theory ſo ſimple and obvious could ſo long have eſcaped the moſt elaborate examination.

But however the caſe may have fared with philoſophy, in common life theſe principles are ſtill implicitly maintained; nor is any other topic of praiſe or blame ever recurred to, when we employ any panegyric or ſatire, any applauſe or cenſure, of human action and behaviour. If we obſerve men, in every intercourſe of buſineſs or pleaſure, in every diſcourſe and converſation; we ſhall find them nowhere, except in the ſchools, at any loſs upon this ſubject. What ſo natural, for inſtance, as the following dialogue? You are very happy, we ſhall ſuppoſe one to ſay, addreſſing himſelf to another, that you have given your daughter to Cleanthes. He is a man of honour and humanity. Every one who has any intercourſe with him, is ſure of fair and kind treatment *. I congratulate you too, ſays another, on the promiſing expectations of this ſon-in-law; whoſe aſſiduous application to the ſtudy of the laws, whoſe quick penetration and early knowledge both of men and buſineſs, prognoſticate the greateſt honours and advancement †. You ſurpriſe me, replies a third, when you talk of Cleanthes as a man of buſineſs and application. I met him lately in a circle of the gayeſt company, and he was the very life and ſoul of our converſation: So much wit with good manners; ſo much gallantry without affectation; ſo much ingenious knowledge ſo genteelly delivered, I have never before obſerved in any one ‡. You would admire him ſtill

* Qualities uſeful to others.

† Qualities uſeful to the perſon himſelf.

‡ Qualities immediately agreeable to others.

ſtill more, ſays a fourth, if you knew him more familiarly. That cheerfulneſs, which you might remark in him, is not a ſudden flaſh ſtruck out by company: It runs through the whole tenor of his life, and preſerves a perpetual ſerenity on his countenance, and tranquillity in his ſoul. He has met with ſevere trials, misfortunes as well as dangers; and by his greatneſs of mind, was ſtill ſuperior to all of them.*. The image, gentlemen, which you have here delineated of Cleanthes, cried I, is that of accompliſhed merit. Each of you has given a ſtroke of the pencil to his figure; and you have unawares exceeded all the pictures drawn by Gratian or Caſtiglione. A philoſopher might ſelect this character as a model of perfect virtue.

And as every quality, which is uſeful or agreeable to ourſelves or others, is, in common life, allowed to be a part of perſonal merit; ſo, no other will ever be received, where men judge of things by their natural, unprejudiced reaſon, without the deluſive gloſſes of ſuperſtition and falſe religion. Celibacy, faſting, penance, mortification, ſelf-denial, humility, ſilence, ſolitude, and the whole train of monkiſh virtues; for what reaſon are they every where rejected by men of ſenſe, but becauſe they ſerve to no manner of purpoſe; neither advance a man's fortune in the world, nor render him a more valuable member of ſociety; neither qualify him for the entertainment of company, nor increaſe his power of ſelf-enjoyment? We obſerve, on the contrary, that they croſs all theſe deſirable ends; ſtupify the underſtanding, and harden the heart, obſcure the fancy, and ſour the temper. We juſtly, therefore, transfer them to the oppoſite column, and place them in the catalogue of vices; nor has any ſuperſtition

* Qualities immediately agreeable to the perſon himſelf.

force ſufficient, among men of the world, to pervert entirely theſe natural ſentiments. A gloomy, hair-brained enthuſiaſt, after his death, may have a place in the calendar; but will ſcarcely ever be admitted, when alive, into intimacy and ſociety, except by thoſe who are as delirious and diſmal as himſelf.

It ſeems a happineſs in the preſent theory, that it enters not into that vulgar diſpute concerning the degrees of benevolence or ſelf-love, which prevail in human nature; a diſpute which is never likely to have any iſſue, both becauſe men, who have taken part, are not eaſily convinced, and becauſe the phænomena, which can be produced on either ſide, are ſo diſperſed, ſo uncertain, and ſubject to ſo many interpretations, that it is ſcarcely poſſible, accurately to compare them, or draw from them any determinate inference or concluſion. It is ſufficient for our preſent purpoſe, if it be allowed, what ſurely, without the greateſt abſurdity, cannot be diſputed, that there is ſome benevolence, however ſmall, infuſed into our boſom; ſome ſpark of friendſhip for human kind; ſome particle of the dove kneaded into our frame, along with the elements of the wolf and ſerpent. Let theſe generous ſentiments be ſuppoſed ever ſo weak; let them be inſufficient to move even a hand or finger of our body; they muſt ſtill direct the determinations of our mind, and, where every thing elſe is equal, produce a cool preference of what is uſeful and ſerviceable to mankind, above what is pernicious and dangerous. A moral diſtinction, therefore, immediately ariſes; a general ſentiment of blame and approbation; a tendency, however faint, to the objects of the one, and a proportionable averſion to thoſe of the other. Nor will thoſe reaſoners, who ſo earneſtly maintain the predominant ſelfiſhneſs of human kind,

kind, be any way ſcandalized at hearing of the weak ſentiments of virtue implanted in our nature. On the contrary, they are found as ready to maintain the one tenet as the other; and the ſpirit of ſatire (for ſuch it appears rather than of corruption), naturally gives riſe to both opinions; which have, indeed, a great and almoſt indiſſoluble connection together.

Avarice, ambition, vanity, and all paſſions vulgarly, though improperly, compriſed under the denomination of Self-love, are here excluded from our theory concerning the origin of morals, not becauſe they are too weak, but becauſe they have not a proper direction for that purpoſe. The notion of morals implies ſome ſentiment common to all mankind, which recommends the ſame object to general approbation, and makes every man, or moſt men, agree in the ſame opinion or deciſion concerning it. It alſo implies ſome ſentiment, ſo univerſal and comprehenſive as to extend to all mankind, and render the actions and conduct, even of the perſons the moſt remote, an object of applauſe or cenſure, according as they agree or diſagree with that rule of right which is eſtabliſhed. Theſe two requiſite circumſtances belong alone to the ſentiment of humanity here inſiſted on. The other paſſions produce, in every breaſt, many ſtrong ſentiments of deſire and averſion, affection and hatred; but theſe neither are felt ſo much in common, nor are ſo comprehenſive as to be the foundation of any general ſyſtem and eſtabliſhed theory of blame or approbation.

When a man denominates another his enemy, his rival, his antagoniſt, his adverſary, he is underſtood to ſpeak the language of ſelf-love, and to expreſs ſentiments peculiar to himſelf, and ariſing from his particular circumſtances and ſituation. But when he beſtows

on any man the epithets of vicious, or odious, or depraved, he then ſpeaks another language, and expreſſes ſentiments, in which he expects all his audience are to concur with him. He muſt here, therefore, depart from his private and particular ſituation, and muſt chooſe a point of view common to him with others: He muſt move ſome univerſal principle of the human frame, and touch a ſtring to which all mankind have an accord and ſymphony. If he mean, therefore, to expreſs, that this man poſſeſſes qualities whoſe tendency is pernicious to ſociety, he has choſen this common point of view, and has touched the principle of humanity, in which every man, in ſome degree, concurs. While the human heart is compounded of the ſame elements as at preſent, it will never be wholly indifferent to public good, nor entirely unaffected with the tendency of characters and manners. And though this affection of humanity may not generally be eſteemed ſo ſtrong as vanity or ambition, yet, being common to all men, it can alone be the foundation of morals, or of any general ſyſtem of blame or praiſe. One man's ambition is not another's ambition; nor will the ſame event or object ſatisfy both: But the humanity of one man is the humanity of every one; and the ſame object touches this paſſion in all human creatures.

But the ſentiments which ariſe from humanity are not only the ſame in all human creatures, and produce the ſame approbation or cenſure, but they alſo comprehend all human creatures; nor is there any one whoſe conduct or character is not, by their means, an object, to every one, of cenſure or approbation. On the contrary, thoſe other paſſions, commonly denominated ſelfiſh, both produce different ſentiments in each individual, according to his particular ſituation; and

alſo

alſo contemplate the greater part of mankind with the utmoſt indifference and unconcern. Whoever has a high regard and eſteem for me, flatters my vanity; whoever expreſſes contempt, mortifies and diſpleaſes me: but as my name is known but to a ſmall part of mankind, there are few who come within the ſphere of this paſſion, or excite, on its account, either my affection or diſguſt. But if you repreſent a tyrannical, inſolent, or barbarous behaviour, in any country or in any age of the world, I ſoon carry my eye to the pernicious tendency of ſuch a conduct, and feel the ſentiment of repugnance and diſpleaſure towards it. No character can be ſo remote as to be, in this light, wholly indifferent to me. What is beneficial to ſociety, or to the perſon himſelf, muſt ſtill be preferred. And every quality or action, of every human being, muſt, by this means, be ranked under ſome claſs or denomination, expreſſive of general cenſure or applauſe.

What more, therefore, can we aſk to diſtinguiſh the ſentiments, dependent on humanity, from thoſe connected with any other paſſion; or to ſatisfy us, why the former are the origin of morals, not the latter? Whatever conduct gains my approbation, by touching my humanity, procures alſo the applauſe of all mankind, by affecting the ſame principle in them; But what ſerves my avarice or ambition, pleaſes theſe paſſions in me alone, and affects not the avarice and ambition of the reſt of mankind. There is no circumſtance of conduct in any man, provided it have a beneficial tendency, that is not agreeable to my humanity, however remote the perſon: but every man, ſo far removed as neither to croſs nor ſerve my avarice and ambition, is regarded as wholly indifferent by thoſe

paſſions. The diſtinction, therefore, between theſe ſpecies of ſentiment being ſo great and evident, language muſt ſoon be moulded upon it, and muſt invent a peculiar ſet of terms, in order to expreſs thoſe univerſal ſentiments of cenſure or approbation, which ariſe from humanity, or from views of general uſefulneſs, and its contrary. Virtue and Vice become then known: morals are recognized: certain general ideas are framed of human conduct and behaviour: ſuch meaſures are expected from men in ſuch ſituations: this action is determined to be conformable to our abſtract rule; that other, contrary. And by ſuch univerſal principles, are the particular ſentiments of ſelf-love frequently controlled and limited *.

From inſtances of popular tumults, ſeditions, factions, panics, and of all paſſions which are ſhared with a multitude, we may learn the influence of ſociety, in exciting and ſupporting any emotion; while the moſt ungovernable diſorders are raiſed, we find, by that means, from the ſlighteſt and moſt frivolous occaſions. Solon was no very cruel, though perhaps an unjuſt legiſlator, who puniſhed neuters in civil wars; and few, I believe, would, in ſuch caſes, incur the penalty, were their affection and diſcourſe allowed ſufficient to abſolve them. No ſelfiſhneſs, and ſcarce any philoſophy, have there force ſufficient to ſupport a total coolneſs and indifference; and he muſt be more or leſs than man, who kindles not in the common blaze. What wonder, then, that moral ſentiments are found of ſuch influence in life; though ſpringing from principles which may appear at firſt ſight ſomewhat ſmall and delicate? But theſe principles, we muſt remark, are ſocial and univerſal:

* See Note [NN].

univerſal: They form, in a manner, the party of human-kind againſt vice or diſorder, its common enemy. And as the benevolent concern for others is diffuſed, in a greater or leſs degree, over all men, and is the ſame in all, it occurs more frequently in diſcourſe, is cheriſhed by ſociety and converſation; and the blame and approbation conſequent on it are thereby rouzed from that lethargy into which they are probably lulled in ſolitary and uncultivated nature. Other paſſions, though perhaps originally ſtronger, yet being ſelfiſh and private, are often overpowered by its force, and yield the dominion of our breaſt to thoſe ſocial and public principles.

Another ſpring of our conſtitution, that brings a great addition of force to moral ſentiment, is, the love of fame; which rules, with ſuch uncontrolled authority, in all generous minds, and is often the grand object of all their deſigns and undertakings. By our continual and earneſt purſuit of a character, a name, a reputation in the world, we bring our own deportment and conduct frequently in review, and conſider how they appear in the eyes of thoſe who approach and regard us. This conſtant habit of ſurveying ourſelves, as it were, in reflection, keeps alive all the ſentiments of right and wrong, and begets, in noble natures, a certain reverence for themſelves as well as others; which is the ſureſt guardian of every virtue. The animal conveniences and pleaſures ſink gradually in their value; while every inward beauty and moral grace is ſtudiouſly acquired, and the mind is accompliſhed in every perfection which can adorn or embelliſh a rational creature.

Here is the moſt perfect morality with which we are acquainted; here is diſplayed the force of many ſympathies.

ſympathies. Our moral ſentiment is itſelf a feeling chiefly of that nature; and our regard to a character with others, ſeems to ariſe only from a care of preſerving a character with ourſelves; and in order to attain this end, we find it neceſſary to prop our tottering judgment on the correſpondent approbation of mankind.

But, that we may accommodate matters, and remove, if poſſible, every difficulty, let us allow all theſe reaſonings to be falſe. Let us allow that, when we reſolve the pleaſure which ariſes from views of utility into the ſentiments of humanity and ſympathy, we have embraced a wrong hypotheſis. Let us confeſs it neceſſary to find ſome other explication of that applauſe which is paid to objects, whether inanimate, animate, or rational, if they have a tendency to promote the welfare and advantage of mankind. However difficult it be to conceive, that an object is approved of on account of its tendency to a certain end, while the end itſelf is totally indifferent; let us ſwallow this abſurdity, and conſider what are the conſequences. The preceding delineation or definition of PERSONAL MERIT muſt ſtill retain its evidence and authority: It muſt ſtill be allowed, that every quality of the mind, which is uſeful or agreeable to the perſon himſelf or to others, communicates a pleaſure to the ſpectator, engages his eſteem, and is admitted under the honourable denomination of virtue or merit. Are not juſtice, fidelity, honour, veracity, allegiance, chaſtity, eſteemed ſolely on account of their tendency to promote the good of ſociety? Is not that tendency inſeparable from humanity, benevolence, lenity, generoſity, gratitude, moderation, tenderneſs, friendſhip, and all the other ſocial virtues? Can it poſſibly be doubted,

ed, that induſtry, diſcretion, frugality, ſecrecy, order, perſeverance, forethought, judgment, and this whole claſs of virtues and accompliſhments, of which many pages would not contain the catalogue; can it be doubted, I ſay, that the tendency of theſe qualities to promote the intereſt and happineſs of their poſſeſſor, is the ſole foundation of their merit? Who can diſpute that a mind, which ſupports a perpetual ſerenity and cheerfulneſs, a noble dignity and undaunted ſpirit, a tender affection and good-will to all around; as it has more enjoyment within itſelf, is alſo a more animating and rejoicing ſpectacle, than if dejected with melancholy, tormented with anxiety, irritated with rage, or ſunk into the moſt abject baſeneſs and degeneracy? And as to the qualities immediately agreeable to others, they ſpeak ſufficiently for themſelves; and he muſt be unhappy indeed, either in his own temper, or in his ſituation and company, who has never perceived the charms of a facetious wit or flowing affability, of a delicate modeſty or decent genteelneſs of addreſs and manner.

I am ſenſible, that nothing can be more unphiloſophical than to be poſitive or dogmatical on any ſubject; and that, even if exceſſive ſcepticiſm could be maintained, it would not be more deſtructive to all juſt reaſoning and inquiry. I am convinced, that where men are the moſt ſure and arrogant, they are commonly the moſt miſtaken, and have there given reins to paſſion, without that proper deliberation and ſuſpenſe, which can alone ſecure them from the groſſeſt abſurdities. Yet I muſt confeſs, that this enumeration puts the matter in ſo ſtrong a light, that I cannot at preſent be more aſſured of any truth which I learn from reaſoning and argument, than that perſonal merit

merit conſiſts entirely in the uſefulneſs or agreeableneſs of qualities to the perſon himſelf poſſeſſed of them, or to others who have any intercourſe with him. But when I reflect, that though the bulk and figure of the earth have been meaſured and delineated, though the motions of the tides have been accounted for, the order and œconomy of the heavenly bodies ſubjected to their proper laws, and INFINITE itſelf reduced to calculation; yet men ſtill diſpute concerning the foundation of their moral duties: When I reflect on this, I ſay, I fall back into diffidence and ſcepticiſm, and ſuſpect, that an hypotheſis ſo obvious, had it been a true one, would long ere now have been received by the unanimous ſuffrage and conſent of mankind.

PART II.

HAVING explained the moral approbation attending merit or virtue, there remains nothing, but briefly to conſider our intereſted obligation to it, and to inquire, whether every man, who has any regard to his own happineſs and welfare, will not beſt find his account in the practice of every moral duty. If this can be clearly aſcertained from the foregoing theory, we ſhall have the ſatisfaction to reflect, that we have advanced principles, which not only, it is hoped, will ſtand the teſt of reaſoning and inquiry, but may contribute to the amendment of mens lives, and their improvement in morality and ſocial virtue. And though the philoſophical truth of any propoſition by no means depends on its tendency to promote the intereſts of ſociety; yet a man has but a bad grace, who delivers a theory, however true, which, he muſt confeſs, leads to a practice dangerous and pernicious. Why rake into thoſe corners

corners of nature, which ſpread a nuiſance all around? Why dig up the peſtilence from the pit in which it is buried? The ingenuity of your reſearches may be admired, but your ſyſtems will be deteſted; and mankind will agree, if they cannot refute them, to ſink them, at leaſt, in eternal ſilence and oblivion. Truths, which are pernicious to ſociety, if any ſuch there be, will yield to errors, which are ſalutary and advantageous.

But what philoſophical truths can be more advantageous to ſociety, than thoſe here delivered, which repreſent virtue in all her genuine and moſt engaging charms, and make us approach her with eaſe, familiarity, and affection? The diſmal dreſs falls off, with which many divines, and ſome philoſophers have covered her; and nothing appears but gentleneſs, humanity, beneficence, affability; nay even, at proper intervals, play, frolic, and gaiety. She talks not of uſeleſs auſterities and rigours, ſuffering and ſelf-denial. She declares, that her ſole purpoſe is, to make her votaries and all mankind, during every inſtant of their exiſtence, if poſſible, cheerful and happy; nor does ſhe ever willingly part with any pleaſure, but in hopes of ample compenſation in ſome other period of their lives. The ſole trouble, which ſhe demands, is that of juſt calculation, and a ſteady preference of the greater happineſs. And if any auſtere pretenders approach her, enemies to joy and pleaſure, ſhe either rejects them as hypocrites and deceivers; or if ſhe admit them in her train, they are ranked, however, among the leaſt favoured of her votaries.

And, indeed, to drop all figurative expreſſion, what hopes can we ever have of engaging mankind to a practice, which we confeſs full of auſterity and rigour?

Or

Or what theory of morals can ever ſerve any uſeful purpoſe, unleſs it can ſhow, by a particular detail, that all the duties, which it recommends, are alſo the true intereſt of each individual? The peculiar advantage of the foregoing ſyſtem ſeems to be, that it furniſhes proper mediums for that purpoſe.

That the virtues which are immediately uſeful or agreeable to the perſon poſſeſſed of them, are deſirable in a view to ſelf-intereſt, it would ſurely be ſuperfluous to prove. Moraliſts, indeed, may ſpare themſelves all the pains which they often take in recommending theſe duties. To what purpoſe collect arguments to evince, that temperance is advantageous, and the exceſſes of pleaſure hurtful? when it appears, that theſe exceſſes are only denominated ſuch, becauſe they are hurtful; and that, if the unlimited uſe of ſtrong liquors, for inſtance, no more impaired health or the faculties of mind and body than the uſe of air or water, it would not be a whit more vicious or blameable.

It ſeems equally ſuperfluous to prove, that the companionable virtues of good manners and wit, decency and genteelneſs, are more deſirable than the contrary qualities. Vanity alone, without any other conſideration, is a ſufficient motive to make us wiſh for the poſſeſſion of theſe accompliſhments. No man was ever willingly deficient in this particular. All our failures here proceed from bad education, want of capacity, or a perverſe and unpliable diſpoſition. Would you have your company coveted, admired, followed; rather than hated, deſpiſed, avoided? Can any one ſeriouſly deliberate in the caſe? As no enjoyment is ſincere, without ſome reference to company and ſociety; ſo no ſociety can be agreeable, or even tolerable, where

where a man feels his preſence unwelcome, and diſcovers all around him ſymptoms of diſguſt and averſion.

But why, in the greater ſociety or confederacy of mankind, ſhould not the caſe be the ſame as in particular clubs and companies? Why is it more doubtful, that the enlarged virtues of humanity, generoſity, beneficence, are deſirable with a view to happineſs and ſelf-intereſt, than the limited endowments of ingenuity and politeneſs? Are we apprehenſive leſt thoſe ſocial affections interfere, in a greater and more immediate degree than any other purſuits, with private utility, and cannot be gratified, without ſome important ſacrifice of honour and advantage? If ſo, we are but ill inſtructed in the nature of the human paſſions, and are more influenced by verbal diſtinctions than by real differences.

Whatever contradiction may vulgarly be ſuppoſed between the ſelfiſh and ſocial ſentiments or diſpoſitions, they are really no more oppoſite than ſelfiſh and ambitious, ſelfiſh and revengeful, ſelfiſh and vain. It is requiſite, that there be an original propenſity of ſome kind, in order to be a baſis to ſelf-love, by giving a reliſh to the objects of its purſuit; and none more fit for this purpoſe than benevolence or humanity. The goods of fortune are ſpent in one gratification or another: The miſer, who accumulates his annual income, and lends it out at intereſt, has really ſpent it in the gratification of his avarice. And it would be difficult to ſhow, why a man is more a loſer by a generous action, than by any other method of expence; ſince the utmoſt which he can attain, by the moſt elaborate ſelfiſhneſs, is the indulgence of ſome affection.

Now,

Now if life, without paſſion, muſt be altogether inſipid and tireſome; let a man ſuppoſe that he has full power of modelling his own diſpoſition, and let him deliberate what appetite or deſire he would chooſe for the foundation of his happineſs and enjoyment. Every affection, he would obſerve, when gratified by ſucceſs, gives a ſatisfaction proportioned to its force and violence: but beſides this advantage, common to all, the immediate feeling of benevolence and friendſhip, humanity and kindneſs, is ſweet, ſmooth, tender, and agreeable, independent of all fortune and accidents. Theſe virtues are beſides attended with a pleaſing conſciouſneſs or remembrance, and keep us in humour with ourſelves as well as others; while we retain the agreeable reflection of having done our part towards mankind and ſociety. And though all men ſhow a jealouſy of our ſucceſs in the purſuits of avarice and ambition; yet are we almoſt ſure of their good-will and good-wiſhes, ſo long as we perſevere in the paths of virtue, and employ ourſelves in the execution of generous plans and purpoſes. What other paſſion is there where we ſhall find ſo many advantages united; an agreeable ſentiment, a pleaſing conſciouſneſs, a good reputation? But of theſe truths, we may obſerve, men are, of themſelves, pretty much convinced; nor are they deficient in their duty to ſociety, becauſe they would not wiſh to be generous, friendly, and humane; but becauſe they do not feel themſelves ſuch.

Treating vice with the greateſt candour, and making it all poſſible conceſſions, we muſt acknowledge, that there is not, in any inſtance, the ſmalleſt pretext for giving it the preference above virtue, with a view to ſelf-intereſt; except, perhaps, in the caſe of juſtice, where a man, taking things in a certain light, may often

often ſeem to be a loſer by his integrity. And though it is allowed, that, without a regard to property, no ſociety could ſubſiſt; yet, according to the imperfect way in which human affairs are conducted, a ſenſible knave, in particular incidents, may think, that an act of iniquity or infidelity will make a conſiderable addition to his fortune, without cauſing any conſiderable breach in the ſocial union and confederacy. That "honeſty is the beſt policy," may be a good general rule; but is liable to many exceptions: And he, it may, perhaps, be thought, conducts himſelf with moſt wiſdom, who obſerves the general rule, and takes advantage of all the exceptions.

I muſt confeſs, that if a man think that this reaſoning much requires an anſwer, it will be a little difficult to find any, which will to him appear ſatisfactory and convincing. If his heart rebel not againſt ſuch pernicious maxims, if he feel no reluctance to the thoughts of villany or baſeneſs, he has indeed loſt a conſiderable motive to virtue; and we may expect, that his practice will be anſwerable to his ſpeculation. But in all ingenuous natures, the antipathy to treachery and roguery is too ſtrong to be counterbalanced by any views of profit or pecuniary advantage. Inward peace of mind, conſciouſneſs of integrity, a ſatisfactory review of our own conduct; theſe are circumſtances very requiſite to happineſs, and will be cheriſhed and cultivated by every honeſt man who feels the importance of them.

Such a one has, beſides, the frequent ſatisfaction of ſeeing knaves, with all their pretended cunning and abilities, betrayed by their own maxims; and while they purpoſe to cheat with moderation and ſecrecy, a tempting incident occurs, nature is frail, and

they give into the ſnare; whence they can never extricate themſelves, without a total loſs of reputation, and the forfeiture of all future truſt and confidence with mankind.

But were they ever ſo ſecret and ſucceſsful, the honeſt man, if he has any tincture of philoſophy, or even common obſervation and reflection, will diſcover that they themſelves are, in the end, the greateſt dupes, and have ſacrificed the invaluable enjoyment of a character, with themſelves at leaſt, for the acquiſition of worthleſs toys and gewgaws. How little is requiſite to ſupply the neceſſities of nature? And in a view to pleaſure, what compariſon between the unbought ſatisfaction of converſation, ſociety, ſtudy, even health and the common beauties of nature, but above all the peaceful reflection on one's own conduct? What compariſon, I ſay, between theſe, and the feveriſh, empty amuſements of luxury and expence? Theſe natural pleaſures, indeed, are really without price; both becauſe they are below all price in their attainment, and above it in their enjoyment.

APPEN-

APPENDIX I.

Concerning Moral Sentiment.

IF the foregoing hypotheſis be received, it will now be eaſy for us to determine the queſtion firſt ſtarted *, concerning the general principles of morals: and though we poſtponed the deciſion of that queſtion, leſt it ſhould then involve us in intricate ſpeculations, which are unfit for moral diſcourſes, we may reſume it at preſent, and examine how far either reaſon or ſentiment enters into all deciſions of praiſe or cenſure.

One principal foundation of moral praiſe being ſuppoſed to lie in the uſefulneſs of any quality or action, it is evident, that reaſon muſt enter for a conſiderable ſhare in all deciſions of this kind; ſince nothing but that faculty can inſtruct us in the tendency of qualities and actions, and point out their beneficial conſequences to ſociety and to their poſſeſſor. In many caſes, this is an affair liable to great controverſy: Doubts may ariſe; oppoſite intereſts may occur; and a preference muſt be given to one ſide, from very nice views, and a ſmall overbalance of utility. This is particularly remarkable in queſtions with regard to juſtice; as is, indeed, natural to ſuppoſe, from that ſpecies of utility which attends this virtue †. Were every ſingle inſtance of juſtice, like that of benevolence, uſeful to ſociety, this would be a more ſimple ſtate of the caſe, and ſeldom liable to great controverſy. But as ſingle inſtances of juſtice are often pernicious in their firſt

* Sect. I. † See Appendix III.

and immediate tendency, and as the advantage to ſociety reſults only from the obſervance of the general rule, and from the concurrence and combination of ſeveral perſons in the ſame equitable conduct, the caſe here becomes more intricate and involved. The various circumſtances of ſociety; the various conſequences of any practice; the various intereſts which may be propoſed: Theſe, on many occaſions, are doubtful, and ſubject to great diſcuſſion and inquiry. The object of municipal laws is to fix all the queſtions with regard to juſtice: The debates of civilians; the reflections of politicians; the precedents of hiſtory and public records, are all directed to the ſame purpoſe. And a very accurate reaſon or judgment is often requiſite, to give the true determination, amidſt ſuch intricate doubts ariſing from obſcure or oppoſite utilities.

But though reaſon, when fully aſſiſted and improved, be ſufficient to inſtruct us in the pernicious or uſeful tendency of qualities and actions; it is not alone ſufficient to produce any moral blame or approbation. Utility is only a tendency to a certain end; and were the end totally indifferent to us, we ſhould feel the ſame indifference towards the means. It is requiſite a ſentiment ſhould here diſplay itſelf, in order to give a preference to the uſeful above the pernicious tendencies. This ſentiment can be no other than a feeling for the happineſs of mankind, and a reſentment of their miſery; ſince theſe are the different ends which virtue and vice have a tendency to promote. Here, therefore, reaſon inſtructs us in the ſeveral tendencies of actions, and humanity makes a diſtinction in favour of thoſe which are uſeful and beneficial.

This partition between the faculties of underſtanding and ſentiment, in all moral deciſions, ſeems clear from the

the preceding hypothesis. But I shall suppose that hypothesis false: It will then be requisite to look out for some other theory that may be satisfactory; and I dare venture to affirm, that none such will ever be found, so long as we suppose reason to be the sole source of morals. To prove this, it will be proper to weigh the five following considerations.

I. It is easy for a false hypothesis to maintain some appearance of truth, while it keeps wholly in generals, makes use of undefined terms, and employs comparisons, instead of instances. This is particularly remarkable in that philosophy, which ascribes the discernment of all moral distinctions to reason alone, without the concurrence of sentiment. It is impossible that, in any particular instance, this hypothesis can so much as be rendered intelligible; whatever specious figure it may make in general declamations and discourses. Examine the crime of ingratitude, for instance; which has place, wherever we observe good-will, expressed and known, together with good offices performed, on the one side, and a return of ill-will or indifference, with ill offices or neglect, on the other: Anatomize all these circumstances, and examine, by your reason alone, in what consists the demerit or blame: You never will come to any issue or conclusion.

Reason judges either of matter of fact, or of relations. Inquire then, first, where is that matter of fact which we here call Crime? point it out; determine the time of its existence; describe its essence or nature; explain the sense or faculty, to which it discovers itself. It resides in the mind of the person who is ungrateful. He must, therefore, feel it, and be conscious of it. But nothing is there, except the passion of ill-will or absolute indifference. You cannot say, that these, of

 themselves,

themſelves, always, and in all circumſtances, are crimes. No: They are only crimes, when directed towards perſons who have before expreſſed and diſplayed good-will towards us. Conſequently, we may infer, that the crime of ingratitude is not any particular individual fact; but ariſes from a complication of circumſtances, which, being preſented to the ſpectator, excites the ſentiment of blame, by the particular ſtructure and fabric of his mind.

This repreſentation, you ſay, is falſe. Crime, indeed, conſiſts not in a particular fact, of whoſe reality we are aſſured by reaſon: But it conſiſts in certain moral relations, diſcovered by reaſon, in the ſame manner as we diſcover, by reaſon, the truths of geometry or algebra. But what are the relations, I aſk, of which you here talk? In the caſe ſtated above, I ſee firſt good-will and good-offices in one perſon; then ill-will and ill-offices in the other. Between theſe, there is the relation of contrariety. Does the crime conſiſt in that relation? But ſuppoſe a perſon bore me ill-will, or did me ill-offices; and I, in return, were indifferent towards him, or did him good-offices: Here is the ſame relation of contrariety; and yet my conduct is often highly laudable. Twiſt and turn this matter as much as you will, you can never reſt the morality on relation; but muſt have recourſe to the deciſions of ſentiment.

When it is affirmed, that two and three are equal to the half of ten; this relation of equality I underſtand perfectly. I conceive, that if ten be divided into two parts, of which one has as many units as the other; and if any of theſe parts be compared to two added to three, it will contain as many units as that compound number: But when you draw thence a compariſon to moral

moral relations, I own that I am altogether at a loſs to underſtand you. A moral action, a crime, ſuch as ingratitude, is a complicated object. Does the morality conſiſt in the relation of its parts to each other? How? After what manner? Specify the relation: Be more particular and explicit in your propoſitions; and you will eaſily ſee their falſehood.

No, ſay you, the morality conſiſts in the relation of actions to the rule of right; and they are denominated good or ill, according as they agree or diſagree with it. What then is this rule of right? In what does it conſiſt? How is it determined? By reaſon, you ſay, which examines the moral relations of actions. So that moral relations are determined by the compariſon of actions to a rule. And that rule is determined by conſidering the moral relations of objects. Is not this fine reaſoning?

All this is metaphyſics, you cry: That is enough: There needs nothing more to give a ſtrong preſumption of falſehood. Yes, reply I: Here are metaphyſics ſurely: But they are all on your ſide, who advance an abſtruſe hypotheſis, which can never be made intelligible, nor quadrate with any particular inſtance or illuſtration. The hypotheſis which we embrace is plain. It maintains, that morality is determined by ſentiment. It defines virtue to be "whatever mental action or quality gives to a ſpectator the pleaſing ſentiment of approbation;" and vice the contrary. We then proceed to examine a plain matter of fact, to wit, what actions have this influence: We conſider all the circumſtances in which theſe actions agree: And thence endeavour to extract ſome general obſervations with regard to theſe ſentiments. If you call this metaphyſics, and find any thing abſtruſe here, you need only

conclude, that your turn of mind is not ſuited to the moral ſciences.

II. When a man, at any time, deliberates concerning his own conduct (as, whether he had better, in a particular emergence, aſſiſt a brother or a benefactor), he muſt conſider theſe ſeparate relations, with all the circumſtances and ſituations of the perſons, in order to determine the ſuperior duty and obligation: And in order to determine the proportion of lines in any triangle, it is neceſſary to examine the nature of that figure, and the relations which its ſeveral parts bear to each other. But notwithſtanding this appearing ſimilarity in the two caſes, there is, at bottom, an extreme difference between them. A ſpeculative reaſoner concerning triangles or circles conſiders the ſeveral known and given relations of the parts of theſe figures; and thence infers ſome unknown relation, which is dependent on the former. But in moral deliberations, we muſt be acquainted, beforehand, with all the objects, and all their relations to each other; and, from a compariſon of the whole, fix our choice or approbation. No new fact to be aſcertained; no new relation to be diſcovered. All the circumſtances of the caſe are ſuppoſed to be laid before us, ere we can fix any ſentence of blame or approbation. If any material circumſtance be yet unknown or doubtful, we muſt firſt employ our inquiry or intellectual faculties to aſſure us of it; and muſt ſuſpend for a time all moral deciſion or ſentiment. While we are ignorant whether a man were aggreſſor or not, how can we determine whether the perſon who killed him be criminal or innocent? But after every circumſtance, every relation is known, the underſtanding has no farther room to operate, nor any object on which it could employ itſelf. The approbation or

blame

blame which then enſues, cannot be the work of the judgment, but of the heart; and is not a ſpeculative propoſition or affirmation, but an active feeling or ſentiment. In the diſquiſitions of the underſtanding, from known circumſtances and relations, we infer ſomething new and unknown. In moral deciſions, all the circumſtances and relations muſt be previouſly known; and the mind, from the contemplation of the whole, feels ſome new impreſſion of affection or diſguſt, eſteem or contempt, approbation or blame.

Hence the great difference between a miſtake of fact, and one of right; and hence the reaſon why the one is commonly criminal, and not the other. When Œdipus killed Laius, he was ignorant of the relation, and, from circumſtances innocent and involuntary, formed erroneous opinions concerning the action which he committed. But when Nero killed Agrippina, all the relations between himſelf and the perſon, and all the circumſtances of the fact, were previouſly known to him: But the motive of revenge, or fear, or intereſt, prevailed in his ſavage heart over the ſentiments of duty and humanity. And when we expreſs that deteſtation againſt him, to which he himſelf, in a little time, became inſenſible; it is not, that we ſee any relations of which he was ignorant; but that, from the rectitude of our diſpoſition, we feel ſentiments againſt which he was hardened, from flattery, and a long perſeverance in the moſt enormous crimes. In theſe ſentiments, then, not in a diſcovery of relations of any kind, do all moral determinations conſiſt. Before we can pretend to form any deciſion of this kind, every thing muſt be known and aſcertained on the ſide of the object or action. Nothing remains but to feel, on our part, ſome ſentiment of blame or approbation; whence

whence we pronounce the action criminal or virtuous.

III. This doctrine will become ſtill more evident, if we compare moral beauty with natural; to which, in many particulars, it bears ſo near a reſemblance. It is on the proportion, relation, and poſition of parts, that all natural beauty depends; but it would be abſurd thence to infer, that the perception of beauty, like that of truth in geometrical problems, conſiſts wholly in the perception of relations, and was performed entirely by the underſtanding or intellectual faculties. In all the ſciences, our mind, from the known relations, inveſtigates the unknown: But in all deciſions of taſte or external beauty, all the relations are beforehand obvious to the eye; and we thence proceed to feel a ſentiment of complacency or diſguſt, according to the nature of the object, and diſpoſition of our organs.

Euclid has fully explained all the qualities of the circle; but has not, in any propoſition, ſaid a word of its beauty. The reaſon is evident. The beauty is not a quality of the circle. It lies not in any part of the line, whoſe parts are equally diſtant from a common centre. It is only the effect, which that figure produces upon the mind, whoſe peculiar fabric or ſtructure renders it ſuſceptible of ſuch ſentiments. In vain would you look for it in the circle, or ſeek it, either by your ſenſes, or by mathematical reaſonings, in all the properties of that figure.

Attend to Palladio and Perrault, while they explain all the parts and proportions of a pillar: They talk of the cornice and frieze, and baſe and entablature, and ſhaft and architrave; and give the deſcription and poſition of each of theſe members. But ſhould you aſk the deſcription and poſition of its beauty, they would readily

readily reply, that the beauty is not in any of the parts or members of a pillar, but reſults from the whole, when that complicated figure is preſented to an intelligent mind, ſuſceptible to thoſe finer ſenſations. 'Till ſuch a ſpectator appear, there is nothing but a figure of ſuch particular dimenſions and proportions: From his ſentiments alone ariſe its elegance and beauty.

Again; attend to Cicero, while he paints the crimes of a Verres or a Catiline; you muſt acknowledge that the moral turpitude reſults, in the ſame manner from the contemplation of the whole, when preſented to a being whoſe organs have ſuch a particular ſtructure and formation. The orator may paint rage, inſolence, barbarity on the one ſide: Meekneſs, ſuffering ſorrow, innocence on the other: But if you feel no indignation or compaſſion ariſe in you from this complication of circumſtances, you would in vain aſk him, in what conſiſts the crime or villany, which he ſo vehemently exclaims againſt; At what time, or on what ſubject it firſt began to exiſt: And what has a few months afterwards become of it, when every diſpoſition and thought of all the actors is totally altered or annihilated. No ſatisfactory anſwer can be given to any of theſe queſtions upon the abſtract hypotheſis of morals; and we muſt at laſt acknowledge, that the crime or immorality is no particular fact or relation, which can be the object of the underſtanding; but ariſes entirely from the ſentiment of diſapprobation, which, by the ſtructure of human nature, we unavoidably feel on the apprehenſion of barbarity or treachery.

IV. Inanimate objects may bear to each other all the ſame relations which we obſerve in moral agents; though the former can never be the object of love or hatred, nor are conſequently ſuſceptible of merit or iniquity.

iniquity. A young tree which overtops and deſtroys its parent, ſtands in all the ſame relations with Nero when he murdered Agrippina; and if morality conſiſted merely in relations, would, no doubt, be equally criminal.

V. It appears evident, that the ultimate ends of human actions can never, in any caſe, be accounted for by reaſon, but recommend themſelves entirely to the ſentiments and affections of mankind, without any dependence on the intellectual faculties. Aſk a man, "why he uſes exerciſe;" he will anſwer, "becauſe he deſires to keep his health." If you then inquire, "why he deſires health;" he will readily reply, "becauſe ſickneſs is painful." If you puſh your inquiries farther, and deſire a reaſon, "why he hates pain," it is impoſſible he can ever give any. This is an ultimate end, and is never referred to any other object.

Perhaps, to your ſecond queſtion, "why he deſires health;" he may alſo reply, that "it is neceſſary for the exerciſe of his calling." If you aſk, "why he is anxious on that head;" he will anſwer, "becauſe he deſires to get money." If you demand "Why?" "It is the inſtrument of pleaſure," ſays he: And beyond this it is an abſurdity to aſk for a reaſon. It is impoſſible there can be a progreſs *in infinitum*; and that one thing can always be a reaſon why another is deſired. Something muſt be deſirable on its own account, and becauſe of its immediate accord or agreement with human ſentiment and affection.

Now, as virtue is an end, and is deſirable on its own account, without fee or reward, merely for the immediate ſatisfaction which it conveys; it is requiſite that there ſhould be ſome ſentiment which it touches; ſome internal taſte or feeling, or whatever you pleaſe

to

to call it, which diſtinguiſhes moral good and evil, and which embraces the one, and rejects the other.

Thus the diſtinct boundaries and offices of reaſon and of taſte are eaſily aſcertained. The former conveys the knowledge of truth and falſehood: The latter gives the ſentiment of beauty and deformity, vice and virtue. The one diſcovers objects, as they really ſtand in nature, without addition or diminution: The other has a productive faculty, and, gilding or ſtaining all natural objects with the colours, borrowed from internal ſentiment, raiſes in a manner a new creation. Reaſon, being cool and diſengaged, is no motive to action, and directs only the impulſe received from appetite or inclination, by ſhowing us the means of attaining happineſs or avoiding miſery: Taſte, as it gives pleaſure or pain, and thereby conſtitutes happineſs or miſery, becomes a motive to action, and is the firſt ſpring or impulſe to deſire and volition. From circumſtances and relations, known or ſuppoſed, the former leads us to the diſcovery of the concealed and unknown: After all circumſtances and relations are laid before us, the latter makes us feel from the whole a new ſentiment of blame or approbation. The ſtandard of the one, being founded on the nature of things, is eternal and inflexible, even by the will of the Supreme Being: The ſtandard of the other, ariſing from the internal frame and conſtitution of animals, is ultimately derived from that Supreme Will, which beſtowed on each being its peculiar nature, and arranged the ſeveral claſſes and orders of exiſtence.

APPEN-

APPENDIX II.

Of Self-love.

THERE is a principle ſuppoſed to prevail among many which is utterly incompatible with all virtue or moral ſentiment; and as it can proceed from nothing but the moſt depraved diſpoſition, ſo in its turn it tends ſtill further to encourage that depravity. This principle is, that all benevolence is mere hypocriſy, friendſhip a cheat, public ſpirit a farce, fidelity a ſnare to procure truſt and confidence; and that, while all of us, at bottom, purſue only our private intereſt, we wear theſe fair diſguiſes in order to put others off their guard, and expoſe them the more to our wiles and machinations. What heart one muſt be poſſeſſed of who profeſſes ſuch principles, and who feels no internal ſentiment that belies ſo pernicious a theory, it is eaſy to imagine: And alſo, what degree of affection and benevolence he can bear to a ſpecies whom he repreſents under ſuch odious colours, and ſuppoſes ſo little ſuſceptible of gratitude or any return of affection. Or if we ſhould not aſcribe theſe principles wholly to a corrupted heart, we muſt at leaſt account for them from the moſt careleſs and precipitate examination. Superficial reaſoners, indeed, obſerving many falſe pretences among mankind, and feeling, perhaps, no very ſtrong reſtraint in their own diſpoſition, might draw a general and a haſty concluſion, that all is equally corrupted, and that men, different from all other

other animals, and indeed from all other ſpecies of exiſtence, admit of no degrees of good or bad, but are, in every inſtance, the ſame creatures under different diſguiſes and appearances.

There is another principle ſomewhat reſembling the former, which has been much inſiſted on by philoſophers, and has been the foundation of many a ſyſtem; that, whatever affection one may feel, or imagine he feels for others, no paſſion is, or can be diſintereſted; that the moſt generous friendſhip, however ſincere, is a modification of ſelf-love; and that, even unknown to ourſelves, we ſeek only our own gratification, while we appear the moſt deeply engaged in ſchemes for the liberty and happineſs of mankind. By a turn of imagination, by a refinement of reflection, by an enthuſiaſm of paſſion, we ſeem to take part in the intereſts of others, and imagine ourſelves diveſted of all ſelfiſh conſiderations: But, at bottom, the moſt generous patriot and moſt niggardly miſer, the braveſt hero and moſt abject coward, have, in every action, an equal regard to their own happineſs and welfare.

Whoever concludes from the ſeeming tendency of this opinion, that thoſe who make profeſſion of it, cannot poſſibly feel the true ſentiments of benevolence, or have any regard for genuine virtue, will often find himſelf, in practice, very much miſtaken. Probity and honour were no ſtrangers to Epicurus and his ſect. Atticus and Horace, ſeem to have enjoyed from nature, and cultivated by reflection, as generous and friendly diſpoſitions as any diſciple of the auſterer ſchools. And among the modern, Hobbes and Locke, who maintained the ſelfiſh ſyſtem of morals, lived irreproachable lives; though the former lay not under any

any reſtraint of religion which might ſupply the defects of his philoſophy.

An Epicurean or a Hobbiſt, readily allows, that there is ſuch a thing as friendſhip in the world without hypocriſy or diſguiſe; though he may attempt, by a philoſophical chemiſtry, to reſolve the elements of this paſſion, if I may ſo ſpeak, into thoſe of another, and explain every affection to be ſelf-love, twiſted and moulded, by a particular turn of imagination, into a variety of appearances. But as the ſame turn of imagination prevails not in every man, nor gives the ſame direction to the original paſſion; this is ſufficient, even according to the ſelfiſh ſyſtem, to make the wideſt difference in human characters, and denominate one man virtuous and humane, another vicious and meanly intereſted. I eſteem the man, whoſe ſelf-love, by whatever means, is ſo directed as to give him a concern for others, and render him ſerviceable to ſociety: As I hate or deſpiſe him who has no regard to any thing beyond his own gratifications and enjoyments. In vain would you ſuggeſt, that theſe characters, though ſeemingly oppoſite, are at bottom the ſame, and that a very inconſiderable turn of thought forms the whole difference between them. Each character, notwithſtanding theſe inconſiderable differences, appears to me, in practice, pretty durable and untranſmutable. And I find not in this, more than in other ſubjects, that the natural ſentiments ariſing from the general appearances of things, are eaſily deſtroyed by ſubtile reflections concerning the minute origin of theſe appearances. Does not the lively, cheerful colour of a countenance inſpire me with complacency and pleaſure; even though I learn from philoſophy, that all difference of complexion ariſes from the moſt minute

minute differences of thickneſs in the moſt minute parts of the ſkin; by means of which a ſuperficies is qualified to reflect one of the original colours of light, and abſorb the others?

But though the queſtion concerning the univerſal or partial ſelfiſhneſs of man, be not ſo material as is uſually imagined to morality and practice, it is certainly of conſequence in the ſpeculative ſcience of human nature, and is a proper object of curioſity and inquiry. It may not, therefore, be unſuitable in this place to beſtow a few reflections upon it *.

The moſt obvious objection to the ſelfiſh hypotheſis is, that as it is contrary to common feeling and our moſt unprejudiced notions, there is required the higheſt ſtretch of philoſophy to eſtabliſh ſo extraordinary a paradox. To the moſt careleſs obſerver, there appear to be ſuch diſpoſitions as benevolence and generoſity; ſuch affections as love, friendſhip, compaſſion, gratitude. Theſe ſentiments have their cauſes, effects, objects, and operations, marked by common language and obſervation, and plainly diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of the ſelfiſh paſſions. And as this is the obvious appearance of things, it muſt be admitted, till ſome hypotheſis be diſcovered, which, by penetrating deeper into human nature, may prove the former affections to be nothing but modifications of the latter. All attempts of this kind have hitherto proved fruitleſs, and ſeem to have proceeded entirely from that love of ſimplicity which has been the ſource of much falſe reaſoning in philoſophy. I ſhall not here enter into any detail on the preſent ſubject. Many able philoſophers have ſhewn the inſufficiency of theſe ſyſtems. And I

* See Note [OO.]

ſhall take for granted what, I believe, the ſmalleſt reflection will make evident to every impartial inquirer.

But the nature of the ſubject furniſhes the ſtrongeſt preſumption, that no better ſyſtem will ever, for the future, be invented, in order to account for the origin of the benevolent from the ſelfiſh affections, and reduce all the various emotions of the human mind to a perfect ſimplicity. The caſe is not the ſame in this ſpecies of philoſophy as in phyſics. Many an hypotheſis in nature, contrary to firſt appearances, has been found, on more accurate ſcrutiny, ſolid and ſatisfactory. Inſtances of this kind are ſo frequent, that a judicious as well as witty philoſopher *, has ventured to affirm, if there be more than one way in which any phænomenon may be produced, that there is a general preſumption for its ariſing from the cauſes which are the leaſt obvious and familiar. But the preſumption always lies on the other ſide, in all inquiries concerning the origin of our paſſions, and of the internal operations of the human mind. The ſimpleſt and moſt obvious cauſe which can there be aſſigned for any phænomenon, is probably the true one. When a philoſopher, in the explication of his ſyſtem, is obliged to have recourſe to ſome very intricate and refined reflections, and to ſuppoſe them eſſential to the production of any paſſion or emotion, we have reaſon to be extremely on our guard againſt ſo fallacious an hypotheſis. The affections are not ſuſceptible of any impreſſion from the refinements of reaſon or imagination; and it is always found, that a vigorous exertion of the latter faculties, neceſſarily, from the narrow capacity of the human mind, deſtroys all activity in the former. Our predominant motive or intention

* Monſ. FONTENELLE.

intention is, indeed, frequently concealed from ourſelves, when it is mingled and confounded with other motives, which the mind, from vanity or ſelf-conceit, is deſirous of ſuppoſing more prevalent: But there is no inſtance, that a concealment of this nature has ever ariſen from the abſtruſeneſs and intricacy of the motive. A man, that has loſt a friend and patron, may flatter himſelf, that all his grief ariſes from generous ſentiments, without any mixture of narrow or intereſted conſiderations: But a man that grieves for a valuable friend who needed his patronage and protection; how can we ſuppoſe that his paſſionate tenderneſs ariſes from ſome metaphyſical regards to a ſelf-intereſt which has no foundation or reality? We may as well imagine, that minute wheels and ſprings, like thoſe of a watch, give motion to a loaded waggon, as account for the origin of paſſion from ſuch abſtruſe reflections.

Animals are found ſuſceptible of kindneſs, both to their own ſpecies and to ours; nor is there, in this caſe, the leaſt ſuſpicion of diſguiſe or artifice. Shall we account for all their ſentiments too from refined deductions of ſelf-intereſt? Or if we admit a diſintereſted benevolence in the inferior ſpecies, by what rule of analogy can we refuſe it in the ſuperior?

Love between the ſexes begets a complacency and good-will very diſtinct from the gratification of an appetite. Tenderneſs to their offspring, in all ſenſible beings, is commonly able alone to counterbalance the ſtrongeſt motives of ſelf-love, and has no manner of dependence on that affection. What intereſt can a fond mother have in view who loſes her health by aſſiduous attendance on her ſick child, and afterwards languiſhes and dies of grief, when freed by its death from the ſlavery of that attendance?

Is gratitude no affection of the human breaſt, or is that a word merely without any meaning or reality? Have we no ſatisfaction in one man's company above another's, and no deſire of the welfare of our friend, even though abſence or death ſhould prevent us from all participation in it? Or what is it commonly that gives us any participation in it, even while alive and preſent, but our affection and regard to him?

Theſe, and a thouſand other inſtances, are marks of a general benevolence in human nature, where no real intereſt binds us to the object. And how an imaginary intereſt, known and avowed for ſuch, can be the origin of any paſſion or emotion, ſeems difficult to explain. No ſatisfactory hypotheſis of this kind has yet been diſcovered; nor is there the ſmalleſt probability, that the future induſtry of men will ever be attended with more favourable ſucceſs.

But farther, if we conſider rightly of the matter, we ſhall find, that the hypotheſis, which allows of a diſintereſted benevolence diſtinct from ſelf-love, has really more ſimplicity in it, and is more conformable to the analogy of nature, than that which pretends to reſolve all friendſhip and humanity into this latter principle. There are bodily wants or appetites, acknowledged by every one, which neceſſarily precede all ſenſual enjoyment, and carry us directly to ſeek poſſeſſion of the object. Thus hunger and thirſt have eating and drinking for their end: and from the gratification of theſe primary appetites ariſes a pleaſure which may become the object of another ſpecies of deſire or inclination that is ſecondary and intereſted. In the ſame manner, there are mental paſſions by which we are impelled immediately to ſeek particular objects, ſuch as fame, or power, or vengeance, without any regard

regard to intereſt; and when theſe objects are attained, a pleaſing enjoyment enſues as the conſequence of our indulged affections. Nature muſt, by the internal frame and conſtitution of the mind, give an original propenſity to fame, ere we can reap any pleaſure from that acquiſition, or purſue it from motives of ſelf-love, and a deſire of happineſs. If I have no vanity, I take no delight in praiſe: If I be void of ambition, power gives me no enjoyment: If I be not angry, the puniſhment of an adverſary is totally indifferent to me. In all theſe caſes, there is a paſſion which points immediately to the object, and conſtitutes it our good or happineſs; as there are other ſecondary paſſions which afterwards ariſe, and purſue it as a part of our happineſs, when once it is conſtituted ſuch by our original affections. Were there no appetite of any kind antecedent to ſelf-love, that propenſity could ſcarcely ever exert itſelf; becauſe we ſhould, in that caſe, have felt few and ſlender pains or pleaſures, and have little miſery or happineſs to avoid or to purſue.

Now, where is the difficulty in conceiving that this may likewiſe be the caſe with benevolence and friendſhip, and that, from the original frame of our temper, we may feel a deſire of another's happineſs or good, which, by means of that affection, becomes our own good, and is afterwards purſued from the combined motives of benevolence and ſelf-enjoyment? Who ſees not that vengeance, from the force alone of paſſion, may be ſo eagerly purſued as to make us knowingly neglect every conſideration of eaſe, intereſt, or ſafety? and, like ſome vindictive animals, infuſe our very ſouls into the wounds we give an enemy *? And

* Animaſque in vulnere ponunt. VIRG.

Dum alteri noccat, ſui negligens, ſays SENECA of Anger. De Ira, lib. i.

what a malignant philoſophy muſt it be, that will not allow to humanity and friendſhip the ſame privileges which are indiſputably granted to the darker paſſions of enmity and reſentment? Such a philoſophy is more like a ſatire than a true delineation or deſcription of human nature; and may be a good foundation for paradoxical wit and raillery, but is a very bad one for any ſerious argument or reaſoning.

APPENDIX III.

Some farther Conſiderations with regard to Juſtice.

THE intention of this Appendix is to give ſome more particular explication of the origin and nature of Juſtice, and to mark ſome differences between it and the other virtues.

The ſocial virtues of humanity and benevolence exert their influence immediately, by a direct tendency or inſtinct, which chiefly keeps in view the ſimple object, moving the affections, and comprehends not any ſcheme or ſyſtem, nor the conſequences reſulting from the concurrence, imitation, or example, of others. A parent flies to the relief of his child; tranſported by that natural ſympathy which actuates him, and which affords no leiſure to reflect on the ſentiments or conduct of the reſt of mankind in like circumſtances. A generous man cheerfully embraces an opportunity of ſerving his friend; becauſe he then feels

feels himſelf under the dominion of the beneficent affections, nor is he concerned whether any other perſon in the univerſe were ever before actuated by ſuch noble motives, or will ever afterwards prove their influence. In all theſe caſes, the ſocial paſſions have in view a ſingle individual object, and purſue the ſafety or happineſs alone of the perſon loved and eſteemed. With this they are ſatisfied: In this they acquieſce. And as the good reſulting from their benign influence, is in itſelf complete and entire, it alſo excites the moral ſentiment of approbation, without any reflection on farther conſequences, and without any more enlarged views of the concurrence or imitation of the other members of ſociety. On the contrary, were the generous friend or diſintereſted patriot to ſtand alone in the practice of beneficence; this would rather inhance his value in our eyes, and join the praiſe of rarity and novelty to his other more exalted merits.

The caſe is not the ſame with the ſocial virtues of juſtice and fidelity. They are highly uſeful, or indeed abſolutely neceſſary, to the well-being of mankind: But the benefit, reſulting from them, is not the conſequence of every individual ſingle act; but ariſes from the whole ſcheme or ſyſtem, concurred in by the whole, or the greater part, of the ſociety. General peace and order are the attendants of juſtice, or a general abſtinence from the poſſeſſions of others: But a particular regard to the particular right of one individual citizen may frequently, conſidered in itſelf, be productive of pernicious conſequences. The reſult of the individual acts is here, in many inſtances directly oppoſite to that of the whole ſyſtem of actions; and the former may be extremely hurtful, while the latter is, to the higheſt degree, advantageous. Riches,

inherited from a parent, are, in a bad man's hand, the inſtrument of miſchief. The right of ſucceſſion may, in one inſtance, be hurtful. Its benefit ariſes only from the obſervance of the general rule; and it is ſufficient, if compenſation be thereby made for all the ills and inconveniences which flow from particular characters and ſituations.

Cyrus, young and unexperienced, conſidered only the individual caſe before him, and reflected on a limited fitneſs and convenience, when he aſſigned the long coat to the tall boy, and the ſhort coat to the other of ſmaller ſize. His governor inſtructed him better; while he pointed out more enlarged views and conſequences, and informed his pupil of the general, inflexible rules, neceſſary to ſupport general peace and order in ſociety.

The happineſs and proſperity of mankind, ariſing from the ſocial virtue of benevolence, and its ſubdiviſions, may be compared to a wall, built by many hands; which ſtill riſes by each ſtone that is heaped upon it; and receives increaſe proportional to the diligence and care of each workman. The ſame happineſs, raiſed by the ſocial virtue of juſtice and its ſubdiviſions, may be compared to the building of a vault, where each individual ſtone would, of itſelf, fall to the ground; nor is the whole fabric ſupported but by the mutual aſſiſtance and combination of its correſponding parts.

All the laws of nature, which regulate property, as well as all civil laws, are general, and regard alone ſome eſſential circumſtances of the caſe, without taking into conſideration the characters, ſituations, and connections of the perſon concerned, or any particular conſequences which may reſult from the determination

of

of theſe laws, in any particular caſe which offers. They deprive, without ſcruple, a beneficent man of all his poſſeſſions, if acquired by miſtake, without a good title; in order to beſtow them on a ſelfiſh miſer, who has already heaped up immenſe ſtores of ſuperfluous riches. Public utility requires, that property ſhould be regulated by general inflexible rules; and though ſuch rules are adopted as beſt ſerve the ſame end of public utility, it is impoſſible for them to prevent all particular hardſhips, or make beneficial conſequences reſult from every individual caſe. It is ſufficient, if the whole plan or ſcheme be neceſſary to the ſupport of civil ſociety, and if the balance of good, in the main, do thereby preponderate much above that of evil. Even the general laws of the univerſe, though planned by infinite wiſdom, cannot exclude all evil or inconvenience in every particular operation.

It has been aſſerted by ſome, that juſtice ariſes from HUMAN CONVENTIONS, and proceeds from the voluntary choice, conſent, or combination of mankind. If by Convention be here meant a promiſe (which is the moſt uſual ſenſe of the word), nothing can be more abſurd than this poſition. The obſervance of promiſes is itſelf one of the moſt conſiderable parts of juſtice; and we are not ſurely bound to keep our word, becauſe we have given our word to keep it. But if by Convention be meant a ſenſe of common intereſt; which ſenſe each man feels in his own breaſt, which he remarks in his fellows, and which carries him, in concurrence with others, into a general plan or ſyſtem of actions, which tends to public utility; it muſt be owned, that, in this ſenſe, juſtice ariſes from human conventions. For if it be allowed (what is, indeed, evident), that the particular conſequences of a particular act

act of juſtice may be hurtful to the public as well as to individuals; it follows, that every man, in embracing that virtue, muſt have an eye to the whole plan or ſyſtem, and muſt expect the concurrence of his fellows in the ſame conduct and behaviour. Did all his views terminate in the conſequences of each act of his own, his benevolence and humanity, as well as his ſelf-love, might often preſcribe to him meaſures of conduct very different from thoſe which are agreeable to the ſtrict rules of right and juſtice.

Thus, two men pull the oars of a boat by common convention, for common intereſt, without any promiſe or contract: Thus gold and ſilver are made the meaſures of exchange; thus ſpeech, and words, and language are fixed, by human convention and agreement. Whatever is advantageous to two or more perſons, if all perform their part; but what loſes all advantage, if only one perform; can ariſe from no other principle. There would otherwiſe be no motive for any one of them to enter into that ſcheme of conduct *.

The word Natural, is commonly taken in ſo many ſenſes, and is of ſo looſe a ſignification, that it ſeems vain to diſpute whether juſtice be natural or not. If ſelf-love, if benevolence, be natural to man; if reaſon and forethought be alſo natural; then may the ſame epithet be applied to juſtice, order, fidelity, property, ſociety. Mens inclination, their neceſſities, lead them to combine; their underſtanding and experience tell them, that this combination is impoſſible, where each governs himſelf by no rule, and pays no regard to the poſſeſſions of others: And from theſe paſſions and reflections conjoined, as ſoon as we obſerve like paſſions and reflections in others, the ſentiment of juſtice, throughout

* See Note [PP].

throughout all ages, has infallibly and certainly had place, to ſome degree or other, in every individual of the human ſpecies. In ſo ſagacious an animal, what neceſſarily ariſes from the exertion of his intellectual faculties, may juſtly be eſteemed natural †.

Among all civilized nations, it has been the conſtant endeavour to remove every thing arbitrary and partial from the deciſion of property, and to fix the ſentence of judges by ſuch general views and conſiderations, as may be equal to every member of the ſociety. For, beſides that nothing could be more dangerous than to accuſtom the bench, even in the ſmalleſt inſtance, to regard private friendſhip or enmity; it is certain, that men, where they imagine that there was no other reaſon for the preference of their adverſary but perſonal favour, are apt to entertain the ſtrongeſt ill-will againſt the magiſtrates and judges. When natural reaſon, therefore, points out no fixed view of public utility, by which a controverſy of property can be decided, poſitive laws are often framed, to ſupply its place, and direct the procedure of all courts of judicature. Where theſe two fail, as often happens, precedents are called for; and a former deciſion, though given itſelf without any ſufficient reaſon, juſtly becomes a ſufficient reaſon for a new deciſion. If direct laws and precedents be wanting, imperfect and indirect ones are brought in aid; and the controverted caſe is ranged under them, by analogical reaſonings and compariſons, and ſimilitudes and correſpondences, which are often more fanciful than real. In general, it may ſafely be affirmed, that juriſprudence is, in this reſpect, different from all the ſciences; and that, in many of its nicer queſtions, there cannot properly be ſaid to be truth or falſehood

† See Note [QQ]

falſehood on either ſide. If one pleader bring the caſe under any former law or precedent, by a refined analogy or compariſon; the oppoſite pleader is not at a loſs to find an oppoſite analogy or compariſon: And the preference given by the judge is often founded more on taſte and imagination, than on any ſolid argument. Public utility is the general object of all courts of judicature; and this utility too requires a ſtable rule in all controverſies: But where ſeveral rules, nearly equal and indifferent, preſent themſelves, it is a very ſlight turn of thought which fixes the deciſion in favour of either party *.

We may juſt obſerve, before we conclude this ſubject, that, after the laws of juſtice are fixed by views of general utility, the injury, the hardſhip, the harm, which reſult to any individual from a violation of them, enter very much into conſideration, and are a great ſource of that univerſal blame which attends every wrong or iniquity. By the laws of ſociety, this coat, this horſe, is mine, and ought to remain perpetually in my poſſeſſion: I reckon on the ſecure enjoyment of it: By depriving me of it, you diſappoint my expectations, and doubly diſpleaſe me, and offend every byſtander. It is a public wrong, ſo far as the rules of equity are violated; It is a private harm, ſo far as an individual is injured. And though the ſecond conſideration could have no place, were not the former previouſly eſtabliſhed; for otherwiſe the diſtinction of mine and thine would be unknown in ſociety: Yet there is no queſtion, but the regard to general good is much enforced by the reſpect to particular. What injures the community, without hurting any individual, is often more

* See Note [RR].

more lightly thought of. But where the greateſt public wrong is alſo conjoined with a conſiderable private one, no wonder the higheſt diſapprobation attends ſo iniquitous a behaviour.

APPENDIX IV.

Of ſome Verbal Diſputes.

NOTHING is more uſual than for philoſophers to encroach upon the province of grammarians, and to engage in diſputes of words, while they imagine, that they are handling controverſies of the deepeſt importance and concern. It was in order to avoid altercations, ſo frivolous and endleſs, that I endeavoured to ſtate with the utmoſt caution the object of our preſent inquiry; and propoſed ſimply to collect, on the one hand, a liſt of thoſe mental qualities which are the object of love or eſteem, and form a part of perſonal merit; and, on the other hand, a catalogue of thoſe qualities which are the object of cenſure or reproach, and which detract from the character of the perſon poſſeſſed of them; ſubjoining ſome reflections concerning the origin of theſe ſentiments of praiſe or blame. On all occaſions, where there might ariſe the leaſt heſitation, I avoided the terms Virtue and Vice; becauſe ſome of thoſe qualities, which I claſſed among the objects of praiſe, receive, in the Engliſh language, the appellation of talents, rather than of virtues; as ſome of the blameable or cenſurable qualities are often called defects,

defects, rather than vices. It may now, perhaps, be expected, that, before we conclude this moral inquiry, we ſhould exactly ſeparate the one from the other; ſhould mark the preciſe boundaries of virtues and talents, vices and defects; and ſhould explain the reaſon and origin of that diſtinction. But in order to excuſe myſelf from this undertaking, which would, at laſt, prove only a grammatical inquiry, I ſhall ſubjoin the four following reflections, which ſhall contain all that I intend to ſay on the preſent ſubject.

Firſt, I do not find, that in the Engliſh, or any other modern tongue, the boundaries are exactly fixed between virtues and talents, vices and defects; or that a preciſe definition can be given of the one as contradiſtinguiſhed from the other. Were we to ſay, for inſtance, that the eſteemable qualities alone, which are voluntary, are entitled to the appellation of virtues, we ſhould ſoon recollect the qualities of courage, equanimity, patience, ſelf-command, with many others, which almoſt every language claſſes under this appellation, though they depend little or not at all on our choice. Should we affirm, that the qualities alone, which prompt us to act our part in ſociety, are entitled to that honourable diſtinction; it muſt immediately occur, that theſe are indeed the moſt valuable qualities, and are commonly denominated the ſocial virtues; but that this very epithet ſuppoſes, that there are alſo virtues of another ſpecies. Should we lay hold of the diſtinction between intellectual and moral endowments, and affirm the laſt alone to be the real and genuine virtues, becauſe they alone lead to action; we ſhould find, that many of thoſe qualities, uſually called intellectual virtues, ſuch as prudence, penetration, diſcernment, diſcretion, had alſo a conſiderable influence on

conduct.

conduct. The diſtinction between the heart and the head, may alſo be adopted: The qualities of the firſt may be defined ſuch as in their immediate exertion are accompanied with a feeling or ſentiment; and theſe alone may be called the genuine virtues: But induſtry, frugality, temperance, ſecrecy, perſeverance, and many other laudable powers or habits, generally ſtyled virtues, are exerted without any immediate ſentiment in the perſon poſſeſſed of them; and are only known to him by their effects. It is fortunate, amidſt all this ſeeming perplexity, that the queſtion, being merely verbal, cannot poſſibly be of any importance. A moral, philoſophical diſcourſe, needs not enter into all theſe caprices of language, which are ſo variable in different dialects, and in different ages of the ſame dialect. But, on the whole, it ſeems to me, that though it is always allowed, that there are virtues of many different kinds, yet when a man is called virtuous, or is denominated a man of virtue, we chiefly regard his ſocial qualities, which are indeed the moſt valuable. It is at the ſame time certain, that any remarkable defect in courage, temperance, œconomy, induſtry, underſtanding, dignity of mind, would bereave even a very good-natured, honeſt man, of this honourable appellation. Who did ever ſay, except by way of irony, that ſuch a one was a man of great virtue, but an egregious blockhead?

But, ſecondly, it is no wonder that languages ſhould not be very preciſe in marking the boundaries between virtues and talents, vices and defects; ſince there is ſo little diſtinction made in our internal eſtimation of them. It ſeems indeed certain, that the ſentiment of conſcious worth, the ſelf-ſatisfaction proceeding from a review of a man's own conduct and character; it ſeems certain,

certain, I ſay, that this ſentiment, which, though the moſt common of all others, has no proper name in our language *, ariſes from the endowments of courage and capacity, induſtry and ingenuity, as well as from any other mental excellencies. Who, on the other hand, is not deeply mortified with reflecting on his own folly and diſſoluteneſs, and feels not a ſecret ſting or compunction, whenever his memory preſents any paſt occurrence where he behaved with ſtupidity or ill-manners? No time can efface the cruel ideas of a man's own fooliſh conduct, or of affronts which cowardice or impudence has brought upon him. They ſtill haunt his ſolitary hours, damp his moſt aſpiring thoughts, and ſhew him, even to himſelf, in the moſt contemptible and moſt odious colours imaginable.

What is there, too, we are more anxious to conceal from others, than ſuch blunders, infirmities, and meanneſſes, or more dread to have expoſed by raillery and ſatire? And is not the chief object of vanity, our bravery or learning, our wit or breeding, our eloquence or addreſs, our taſte or abilities? Theſe we diſplay with care, if not with oſtentation; and we commonly ſhew more ambition of excelling in them, than even in the ſocial virtues themſelves, which are, in reality, of ſuch ſuperior excellence. Good nature and honeſty, eſpecially the latter, are ſo indiſpenſably required, that though the greateſt cenſure attends any violation of theſe duties, no eminent praiſe follows ſuch common inſtances of them, as ſeem eſſential to the ſupport of human ſociety. And hence the reaſon, in my opinion, why, though men often extol ſo liberally the qualities of their heart, they are ſhy in commending the endowments of their head: becauſe the latter virtues, being ſuppoſed

* See Note [SS].

ſuppoſed more rare and extraordinary, are obſerved to be the more uſual objects of pride and ſelf-conceit; and when boaſted of, beget a ſtrong ſuſpicion of theſe ſentiments.

It is hard to tell whether you hurt a man's character moſt by calling him a knave or a coward; and whether a beaſtly glutton or drunkard be not as odious and contemptible, as a ſelfiſh, ungenerous miſer. Give me my choice, and I would rather, for my own happineſs and ſelf-enjoyment, have a friendly, humane heart, than poſſeſs all the other virtues of Demoſthenes and Philip united: But I would rather paſs with the world for one endowed with extenſive genius and intrepid courage, and ſhould thence expect ſtronger inſtances of general applauſe and admiration. The figure which a man makes in life, the reception which he meets with in company, the eſteem paid him by his acquaintance; all theſe advantages depend as much upon his good ſenſe and judgment, as upon any other part of his character. Had a man the beſt intentions in the world, and were the fartheſt removed from all injuſtice and violence, he would never be able to make himſelf be much regarded, without a moderate ſhare, at leaſt, of parts and underſtanding.

What is it then we can here diſpute about? If ſenſe and courage, temperance and induſtry, wiſdom and knowledge, confeſſedly form a conſiderable part of perſonal merit; if a man, poſſeſſed of theſe qualities, is both better ſatisfied with himſelf, and better entitled to the good-will, eſteem, and ſervices of others, than one entirely deſtitute of them; if, in ſhort, the ſentiments are ſimilar, which ariſe from theſe endowments, and from the ſocial virtues; is there any reaſon for being ſo extremely ſcrupulous about a word, or diſputing

whether they be entitled to the denomination of virtues? It may, indeed, be pretended, that the ſentiment of approbation, which thoſe accompliſhments produce, beſides its being inferior, is alſo ſomewhat different from that which attends the virtues of juſtice and humanity. But this ſeems not a ſufficient reaſon for ranking them entirely under different claſſes and appellations. The character of Cæſar and that of Cato, as drawn by Salluſt, are both of them virtuous, in the ſtricteſt and moſt limited ſenſe of the word; but in a different way: Nor are the ſentiments entirely the ſame which ariſe from them. The one produces love, the other eſteem: The one is amiable; the other awful: We ſhould wiſh to meet the one character in a friend; the other we ſhould be ambitious of in ourſelves. In like manner, the approbation which attends temperance, or induſtry, or frugality, may be ſomewhat different from that which is paid to the ſocial virtues, without making them entirely of a different ſpecies. And, indeed, we may obſerve, that theſe endowments, more than the other virtues, produce not, all of them, the ſame kind of approbation. Good ſenſe and genius beget eſteem and regard: Wit and humour excite love and affection *.

Moſt people, I believe, will naturally, without premeditation, aſſent to the definition of the elegant and judicious poet.

Virtue (for mere good-nature is a fool)
Is ſenſe and ſpirit with humanity †.

What pretenſions has a man to our generous aſſiſtance or good offices, who has diſſipated his wealth in profuſe expences, idle vanities, chimerical projects, diſſolute

* See Note [TT].

† The Art of preſerving Health, Book 4.

diſſolute pleaſures, or extravagant gaming? Theſe vices (for we ſcruple not to call them ſuch) bring miſery unpitied, and contempt on every one addicted to them.

Achæus, a wiſe and prudent prince, fell into a fatal ſnare, which coſt him his crown and life, after having uſed every reaſonable precaution to guard himſelf againſt it. On that account, ſays the hiſtorian, he is a juſt object of regard and compaſſion; his betrayers alone, of hatred and contempt *.

The precipitate flight and improvident negligence of Pompey, at the beginning of the civil wars, appeared ſuch notorious blunders to Cicero, as quite palled his friendſhip towards that great man: "In the ſame manner," ſays he, "as want of cleanlineſs, decency, or diſcretion in a miſtreſs, are found to alienate our affections." For he ſo expreſſes himſelf, where he talks, not in the character of a philoſopher, but in that of a ſtateſman and man of the world, to his friend Atticus †.

But the ſame Cicero, in imitation of all the ancient moraliſts, when he reaſons as a philoſopher, enlarges very much his ideas of virtue, and comprehends every laudable quality or endowment of the mind under that honourable appellation. This leads to the third reflection which we propoſed to make, to wit, that the ancient moraliſts, the beſt models, made no material diſtinction among the different ſpecies of mental endowments and defects, but treated all alike under the appellation of virtues and vices, and made them indiſcriminately the object of their moral reaſonings. The prudence explained in Cicero's Offices ‡, is that ſa-

* Polybius, lib. viii. cap. 2.

† Lib. ix. epiſt. 10. ‡ Lib. i. cap. 6.

gacity, which leads to the diſcovery of truth, and preſerves us from error and miſtake. Magnanimity, temperance, decency, are there alſo at large diſcourſed of. And as that eloquent moraliſt followed the common received diviſion of the four cardinal virtues, our ſocial duties form but one head in the general diſtribution of his ſubject *.

We need only peruſe the titles of chapters in Ariſtotle's Ethics to be convinced, that he ranks courage, temperance, magnificence, magnanimity, modeſty, prudence, and a manly openneſs, among the virtues, as well as juſtice and friendſhip.

To ſuſtain and to abſtain, that is, to be patient and continent, appeared to ſome of the ancients a ſummary comprehenſion of all morals.

Epictetus has ſcarcely ever mentioned the ſentiment of humanity and compaſſion, but in order to put his diſciples on their guard againſt it. The virtue of the Stoics ſeems to conſiſt chiefly in a firm temper, and a ſound underſtanding. With them, as with Solomon and the eaſtern moraliſts, folly and wiſdom are equivalent to vice and virtue.

Men will praiſe thee, ſays David †, when thou doſt well unto thyſelf. I hate a wiſe man, ſays the Greek poet, who is not wiſe to himſelf ‡.

Plutarch is no more cramped by ſyſtems in his philoſophy than in his hiſtory. Where he compares the great men of Greece and Rome, he fairly ſets in oppoſition all their blemiſhes and accompliſhments, of whatever kind, and omits nothing conſiderable, which can either depreſs or exalt their characters. His moral

* See Note [UU]. † Pſalm 49.

‡ Μισω σοφιστην ὁστις ουκ αυτω σοφος. EURIPIDES.

ral diſcourſes contain the ſame free and natural cenſure of men and manners.

The character of Hannibal, as drawn by Livy *, is eſteemed partial, but allows him many eminent virtues. Never was there a genius, ſays the hiſtorian, more equally fitted for thoſe oppoſite offices of commanding and obeying; and it were, therefore, difficult to determine whether he rendered himſelf dearer to the general or to the army. To none would Haſdrubal intruſt more willingly the conduct of any dangerous enterprize; under none did the ſoldiers diſcover more courage and confidence. Great boldneſs in facing danger, great prudence in the midſt of it. No labour could fatigue his body, or ſubdue his mind. Cold and heat were indifferent to him: Meat and drink he ſought as ſupplies to the neceſſities of nature, not as gratifications of his voluptuous appetites. Waking or reſt he uſed indiſcriminately by night or by day.——Theſe great VIRTUES were balanced by great VICES: Inhuman cruelty; perfidy more than punic; no truth, no faith, no regard to oaths, promiſes, or religion.

The character of Alexander the Sixth, to be found in Guicciardin †, is pretty ſimilar, but juſter; and is a proof, that even the moderns, where they ſpeak naturally, hold the ſame language with the ancients. In this pope, ſays he, there was a ſingular capacity and judgment: Admirable prudence; a wonderful talent of perſuaſion; and in all momentous enterprizes, a diligence and dexterity incredible. But theſe virtues were infinitely overbalanced by his vices; no faith, no religion, inſatiable avarice, exorbitant ambition, and a more than barbarous cruelty.

* Lib. xxi. cap. 4. † Lib. 1.

Polybius *, reprehending Timæus for his partiality againſt Agathocles, whom he himſelf allows to be the moſt cruel and impious of all tyrants, ſays, If he took refuge in Syracuſe, as aſſerted by that hiſtorian, flying the dirt, and ſmoke, and toil of his former profeſſion of a potter; and if, proceeding from ſuch ſlender beginnings, he became maſter, in a little time, of all Sicily; brought the Carthaginian ſtate into the utmoſt danger; and at laſt died in old age, and in poſſeſſion of ſovereign dignity: Muſt he not be allowed ſomething prodigious and extraordinary, and to have poſſeſſed great talents and capacity for buſineſs and action? His hiſtorian, therefore, ought not to have alone related what tended to his reproach and infamy; but alſo what might redound to his PRAISE and HONOUR.

In general, we may obſerve, that the diſtinction of voluntary or involuntary was little regarded by the ancients in the moral reaſonings; where they frequently treated the queſtion as very doubtful, "whether virtue could be taught or not †?" They juſtly conſidered, that cowardice, meanneſs, levity, anxiety, impatience, folly, and many other qualities of the mind, might appear ridiculous and deformed, contemptible and odious, though independent of the will. Nor could it be ſuppoſed, at all times, in every man's power to attain every kind of mental, more than of exterior beauty.

And here there recurs the fourth reflection which I purpoſed to make, in ſuggeſting the reaſon, why modern philoſophers have often followed a courſe, in their

* Lib. xii.

† Vid. Plato in Menone, Seneca *de otio ſap.* cap. 31. So alſo Horace, *Virtutem doctrina paret, naturane donet.* Epiſt. lib. i. ep. 18. Æſchines Socraticus, Dial. 1.

their moral inquiries, ſo different from that of the ancients. In latter times, philoſophy of all kinds, eſpecially ethics, have been more cloſely united with theology than ever they were obſerved to be among the Heathens; and as this latter ſcience admits of no terms of compoſition, but bends every branch of knowledge to its own purpoſe, without much regard to the phænomena of nature, or to the unbiaſſed ſentiments of the mind; hence reaſoning, and even language, have been warped from their natural courſe, and diſtinctions have been endeavoured to be eſtabliſhed, where the difference of the objects was, in a manner, imperceptible. Philoſophers, or rather divines under that diſguiſe, treating all morals, as on a like footing with civil laws, guarded by the ſanctions of reward and puniſhment, were neceſſarily led to render this circumſtance, of voluntary or involuntary, the foundation of their whole theory. Every one may employ terms in what ſenſe he pleaſes: But this, in the mean time, muſt be allowed, that ſentiments are every day experienced of blame and praiſe, which have objects beyond the dominion of the will or choice, and of which it behoves us, if not as moraliſts, as ſpeculative philoſophers at leaſt, to give ſome ſatisfactory theory and explication.

A blemiſh, a fault, a vice, a crime; theſe expreſſions ſeem to denote different degrees of cenſure and diſapprobation; which are, however, all of them, at the bottom, pretty nearly of the ſame kind or ſpecies. The explication of one will eaſily lead us into a juſt conception of the others; and it is of greater conſequence to attend to things, than to verbal appellations. That we owe a duty to ourſelves, is confeſſed even in

the moſt vulgar ſyſtem of morals; and it muſt be of conſequence to examine that duty, in order to ſee whether it bears any affinity to that which we owe to ſociety. It is probable, that the approbation, attending the obſervance of both, is of a ſimilar nature, and ariſes from ſimilar principles, whatever appellation we may give to either of theſe excellencies.

A

DIALOGUE.

MY friend, Palamedes, who is as great a rambler in his principles as in his perſon, and who has run over, by ſtudy and travel, almoſt every region of the intellectual and material world, ſurpriſed me lately with an account of a nation, with whom, he told me, he had paſſed a conſiderable part of his life, and whom he found, in the main, a people extremely civilized and intelligent.

There is a country, ſaid he, in the world, called Fourli, no matter for its longitude or latitude, whoſe inhabitants have ways of thinking, in many things, particularly in morals, diametrically oppoſite to ours. When I came among them, I found that I muſt ſubmit to double pains; firſt to learn the meaning of the terms in their language, and then to know the import of thoſe terms, and the praiſe or blame attached to them. After a word had been explained to me, and the character which it expreſſed had been deſcribed, I concluded, that ſuch an epithet muſt neceſſarily be the greateſt reproach in the world; and was extremely ſurpriſed to find one in a public company apply it to a perſon, with whom he lived in the ſtricteſt intimacy and friendſhip. "You fancy," ſaid I, one day to an acquaintance, "that Changuis is your mortal "enemy:

" enemy: I love to extinguiſh quarrels; and I muſt " therefore tell you, that I heard him talk of you in " the moſt obliging manner." But to my great aſtoniſhment, when I repeated Changuis's words, though I had both remembered and underſtood them perfectly, I found, that they were taken for the moſt mortal affront, and that I had very innocently rendered the breach between theſe perſons altogether irreparable.

As it was my fortune to come among this people on a very advantageous footing, I was immediately introduced to the beſt company; and being deſired by Alcheic to live with him, I readily accepted of his invitation; as I found him univerſally eſteemed for his perſonal merit, and indeed regarded by every one in Fourli as a perfect character.

One evening he invited me, as an amuſement, to bear him company in a ſerenade, which he intended to give to Gulki, with whom, he told me, he was extremely enamoured; and I ſoon found that his taſte was not ſingular: For we met many of his rivals, who had come on the ſame errand. I very naturally concluded, that this miſtreſs of his muſt be one of the fineſt women in town; and I already felt a ſecret inclination to ſee her, and be acquainted with her. But as the moon began to riſe, I was much ſurpriſed to find, that we were in the midſt of the univerſity where Gulki ſtudied: And I was ſomewhat aſhamed for having attended my friend on ſuch an errand.

I was afterwards told, that Alcheic's choice of Gulki was very much approved of by all the good company in town; and that it was expected, while he gratified his own paſſion, he would perform to that young man the ſame good office which he had himſelf owed to Elcouf. It ſeems Alcheic had been very handſome

in

in his youth, had been courted by many lovers; but had beſtowed his favours chiefly on the ſage Elcouf; to whom he was ſuppoſed to owe, in a great meaſure, the aſtoniſhing progreſs which he had made in philoſophy and virtue.

It gave me ſome ſurpriſe, that Alcheic's wife (who by the by happened alſo to be his ſiſter) was nowiſe ſcandalized at this ſpecies of infidelity.

Much about the ſame time I diſcovered (for it was not attempted to be kept a ſecret from me or any body) that Alcheic was a murderer and a parricide, and had put to death an innocent perſon, the moſt nearly connected with him, and whom he was bound to protect and defend by all the ties of nature and humanity. When I aſked, with all the caution and deference imaginable, what was his motive for this action? he replied coolly, that he was not then ſo much at eaſe in his circumſtances as he is at preſent, and that he had acted, in that particular, by the advice of all his friends.

Having heard Alcheic's virtue ſo extremely celebrated, I pretended to join in the general voice of acclamation; and only aſked, by way of curioſity, as a ſtranger, which of all his noble actions was moſt highly applauded? and I ſoon found, that all ſentiments were united in giving the preference to the aſſaſſination of Uſbek. This Uſbek had been to the laſt moment Alcheic's intimate friend, had laid many high obligations upon him, had even ſaved his life on a certain occaſion, and had by his will, which was found after the murder, made him heir to a conſiderable part of his fortune. Alcheic, it ſeems, conſpired with about twenty or thirty more, moſt of them alſo Uſbek's friends; and falling altogether on that unhappy man, when he was not aware, they had torn him with a hundred

hundred wounds, and given him that reward for all his paſt favours and obligations. Uſbek, ſaid the general voice of the people, had many great and good qualities; his very vices were ſhining, magnificent, and generous: But this action of Alcheic's ſets him far above Uſbek in the eyes of all judges of merit; and is one of the nobleſt that ever perhaps the ſun ſhone upon.

Another part of Alcheic's conduct, which I alſo found highly applauded, was his behaviour towards Caliſh, with whom he was joined in a project or undertaking of ſome importance. Caliſh, being a paſſionate man, gave Alcheic one day a ſound drubbing; which he took very patiently, waited the return of Caliſh's good-humour, kept ſtill a fair correſpondence with him; and by that means brought the affair, in which they were joined, to a happy iſſue, and gained to himſelf immortal honour by his remarkable temper and moderation.

I have lately received a letter from a correſpondent in Fourli; by which I learn, that, ſince my departure, Alcheic, falling into a bad ſtate of health, has fairly hanged himſelf; and has died univerſally regretted and applauded in that country. So virtuous and noble a life, ſays each Fourlian, could not be better crowned than by ſo noble an end; and Alcheic has proved by this, as well as by all his other actions, what was his conſtant principle during his life, and what he boaſted of near his laſt moments, that a wiſe man is ſcarcely inferior to the great god Vitzli. This is the name of the ſupreme deity among the Fourlians.

The notions of this people, continued Palamedes, are as extraordinary with regard to good manners and ſociableneſs, as with regard to morals. My friend Alcheic

cheic formed once a party for my entertainment, compoſed of all the prime wits and philoſophers of Fourli; and each of us brought his meſs along with him to the place where we aſſembled. I obſerved one of them to be worſe provided than the reſt, and offered him a ſhare of my meſs, which happened to be a roaſted pullet: And I could not but remark, that he and all the reſt of the company ſmiled at my ſimplicity. I was told, that Alcheic had once ſo much intereſt with his club as to prevail with them to eat in common, and that he had made uſe of an artifice for that purpoſe. He perſuaded thoſe, whom he obſerved to be worſt provided, to offer their meſs to the company; after which, the others, who had brought more delicate fare, were aſhamed not to make the ſame offer. This is regarded as ſo extraordinary an event, that it has ſince, as I learn, been recorded in the hiſtory of Alcheic's life, compoſed by one of the greateſt geniuſes of Fourli.

Pray, ſaid I, Palamedes, when you were at Fourli, did you alſo learn the art of turning your friends into ridicule, by telling them ſtrange ſtories, and then laughing at them, if they believed you. I aſſure you, replied he, had I been diſpoſed to learn ſuch a leſſon, there was no place in the world more proper. My friend, ſo often mentioned, did nothing, from morning to night, but ſneer, and banter, and rally; and and you could ſcarcely ever diſtinguiſh whether he were in jeſt or earneſt. But you think, then, that my ſtory is improbable; and that I have uſed, or rather abuſed, the privilege of a traveller? To be ſure, ſaid I, you were but in jeſt. Such barbarous and ſavage manners are not only incompatible with a civilized, intelligent people, ſuch as you ſaid theſe were, but are

ſcarcely

ſcarcely compatible with human nature. They exceed all we ever read of among the Mingrelians and Topinambous.

Have a care, cried he, have a care! You are not aware that you are ſpeaking blaſphemy, and are abuſing your favourites the Greeks, eſpecially the Athenians, whom I have couched all along under theſe bizarre names I employed. If you conſider aright, there is not one ſtroke of the foregoing character which might not be found in the man of higheſt merit at Athens, without diminiſhing in the leaſt from the brightneſs of his character. The amours of the Greeks, their marriages *, and the expoſing of their children, cannot but ſtrike you immediately. The death of Uſbek is an exact counter-part to that of Cæſar.

All to a trifle, ſaid I, interrupting him: You did not mention that Uſbek was an uſurper.

I did not, replied he: leſt you ſhould diſcover the parallel I aimed at. But even adding this circumſtance, we ſhould make no ſcruple, according to our ſentiments of morals, to denominate Brutus and Caſſius ungrateful traitors and aſſaſſins; though you know that they are, perhaps, the higheſt characters of all antiquity; and the Athenians erected ſtatues to them, which they placed near thoſe of Harmodius and Ariſtogiton, their own deliverers. And if you think this circumſtance, which you mention, ſo material to abſolve theſe patriots, I ſhall compenſate it by another, not mentioned, which will equally aggravate their crime. A few days before the execution of their fatal purpoſe, they all ſwore fealty to Cæſar; and proteſting to hold his

* The laws of ATHENS allowed a man to marry his ſiſter by the father. SOLON's law forbids pæderaſty to ſlaves, as being an act of too great dignity for ſuch mean perſons.

his perſon ever ſacred, they touched the altar with thoſe hands which they had already armed for his deſtruction *.

I need not remind you of the famous and applauded ſtory of Themiſtocles, and of his patience towards Eurybiades the Spartan, his commanding officer, who, heated by debate, lifted his cane to him in a council of war (the ſame thing as if he had cudgelled him), "Strike!" cries the Athenian, "ſtrike! but hear me."

You are too good a ſcholar not to diſcover the ironical Socrates and his Athenian club in my laſt ſtory; and you will certainly obſerve, that it is exactly copied from Xenophon, with a variation only of the names †. And I think I have fairly made it appear, that an Athenian man of merit might be ſuch a one as with us would paſs for inceſtuous, a parricide, an aſſaſſin, an ungrateful, perjured traitor, and ſomething elſe too abominable to be named; not to mention his ruſticity and ill manners. And having lived in this manner, his death might be entirely ſuitable: he might conclude the ſcene by a deſperate act of ſelf-murder, and die with the moſt abſurd blaſphemies in his mouth. And notwithſtanding all this, he ſhall have ſtatues, if not altars, erected to his memory; poems and orations ſhall be compoſed in his praiſe; great ſects ſhall be proud of calling themſelves by his name; and the moſt diſtant poſterity ſhall blindly continue their admiration: Though were ſuch a one to ariſe among themſelves, they would juſtly regard him with horror and execration.

I might have been aware, replied I, of your artifice. You ſeem to take pleaſure in this topic: and are indeed

* APPIAN. Bell. Civ. lib. iii. SUETONIUS in vita CÆSARIS.

† Mem. Soc. lib. iii. ſub fine.

deed the only man I ever knew, who was well acquainted with the ancients, and did not extremely admire them. But inſtead of attacking their philoſophy, their eloquence, or poetry, the uſual ſubjects of controverſy between us, you now ſeem to impeach their morals, and accuſe them of ignorance in a ſcience, which is the only one, in my opinion, in which they are not ſurpaſſed by the moderns. Geometry, phyſics, aſtronomy, anatomy, botany, geography, navigation; in theſe we juſtly claim the ſuperiority: But what have we to oppoſe to their moraliſts? Your repreſentation of things is fallacious. You have no indulgence for the manners and cuſtoms of different ages. Would you try a Greek or Roman by the common law of England? Hear him defend himſelf by his own maxims; and then pronounce.

There are no manners ſo innocent or reaſonable, but may be rendered odious or ridiculous, if meaſured by a ſtandard unknown to the perſons; eſpecially if you employ a little art or eloquence in aggravating ſome circumſtances and extenuating others, as beſt ſuits the purpoſe of your diſcourſe. All theſe artifices may eaſily be retorted on you. Could I inform the Athenians, for inſtance, that there was a nation in which adultery, both active and paſſive, ſo to ſpeak, was in the higheſt vogue and eſteem; in which every man of education choſe for his miſtreſs a married woman, the wife, perhaps, of his friend and companion; and valued himſelf upon theſe infamous conqueſts, as much as if he had been ſeveral times a conqueror in boxing or wreſtling at the Olympic games: in which every man alſo took a pride in his tameneſs and facility with regard to his own wife, and was glad to make friends or gain intereſt by allowing her to proſtitute her charms;

and

and even, without any ſuch motive, gave her full liberty and indulgence: I aſk what ſentiments the Athenians would entertain of ſuch a people; they who never mentioned the crime of adultery but in conjunction with robbery and poiſoning? Which would they admire moſt, the villany or the meanneſs of ſuch a conduct?

Should I add, that the ſame people were as proud of their ſlavery and dependence, as the Athenians of their liberty; and though a man among them were oppreſſed, diſgraced, impoveriſhed, inſulted, or impriſoned by the tyrant, he would ſtill regard it as the higheſt merit to love, ſerve, and obey him; and even to die for his ſmalleſt glory or ſatisfaction.—Theſe noble Greeks would probably aſk me, whether I ſpoke of a human ſociety, or of ſome inferior, ſervile ſpecies?

It was then I might inform my Athenian audience, that theſe people, however, wanted not ſpirit and bravery. If a man, ſay I, though their intimate friend, ſhould throw out, in a private company, a raillery againſt them, nearly approaching any of thoſe with which your generals and demagogues every day regale each other in the face of the whole city, they never can forgive him but in order to revenge themſelves; they oblige him immediately to run them through the body, or be himſelf murdered. And if a man, who is an abſolute ſtranger to them, ſhould deſire them, at the peril of their own life, to cut the throat of their boſom companion, they immediately obey, and think themſelves highly obliged and honoured by the commiſſion. Theſe are their maxims of honour: This is their favourite morality.

But though ſo ready to draw their ſword againſt their friends and countrymen; no diſgrace, no infamy,

no pain, no poverty, will ever engage theſe people to turn the point of it againſt their own breaſt. A man of rank would row in the gallies, would beg his bread, would languiſh in priſon, would ſuffer any tortures; and ſtill preſerve his wretched life. Rather than eſcape his enemies by a generous contempt of death, he would infamouſly receive the ſame death from his enemies, aggravated by their triumphant inſults, and by the moſt exquiſite ſufferings.

It is very uſual too, continue I, among this people to erect jails, where every art of plaguing and tormenting the unhappy priſoners is carefully ſtudied and practiſed: And in theſe jails it is uſual for a parent voluntarily to ſhut up ſeveral of his children; in order that another child, whom he owns to have no greater, or rather leſs merit than the reſt, may enjoy his whole fortune, and wallow in every kind of voluptuouſneſs and pleaſure. Nothing ſo virtuous in their opinion as this barbarous partiality.

But what is more ſingular in this whimſical nation, ſay I to the Athenians, is, that a frolic of yours during the Saturnalia*, when the ſlaves are ſerved by their maſters, is ſeriouſly continued by them throughout the whole year, and throughout the whole courſe of their lives; accompanied too with ſome circumſtances which ſtill farther augment the abſurdity and ridicule. Your ſport only elevates for a few days thoſe whom fortune has thrown down, and whom ſhe too, in ſport, may really elevate for ever above you: But this nation gravely exalts thoſe whom nature has ſubjected to them, and whoſe inferiority and infirmities are abſolutely incurable. The women, though without virtue, are

* The Greeks kept the feaſt of Saturn or Chronus as well as the Romans. See LUCIAN. Epiſt. SATURN.

are their maſters and ſovereigns: Theſe they reverence, praiſe, and magnify: To theſe they pay the higheſt deference and reſpect: And in all places and all times, the ſuperiority of the females is readily acknowledged and ſubmitted to by every one who has the leaſt pretenſions to education and politeneſs. Scarce any crime would be ſo univerſally deteſted as an infraction of this rule.

You need go no farther, replied Palamedes: I can eaſily conjecture the people whom you aim at. The ſtrokes with which you have painted them are pretty juſt; and yet you muſt acknowledge, that ſcarce any people are to be found, either in ancient or modern times, whoſe national character is, upon the whole, leſs liable to exception. But I give you thanks for helping me out with my argument. I had no intention of exalting the moderns at the expence of the ancients. I only meant to repreſent the uncertainty of all theſe judgments concerning characters; and to convince you that faſhion, vogue, cuſtom, and law, were the chief foundation of all moral determinations. The Athenians ſurely were a civilized, intelligent people, if ever there were one; and yet their man of merit might, in this age, be held in horror and execration. The French are alſo, without doubt, a very civilized, intelligent people; and yet their man of merit might, with the Athenians, be an object of the higheſt contempt and ridicule, and even hatred. And what renders the matter more extraordinary: Theſe two people are ſuppoſed to be the moſt ſimilar in their national character, of any in ancient and modern times; and while the Engliſh flatter themſelves that they reſemble the Romans, their neighbours on the continent draw the parallel between themſelves and thoſe polite Greeks.

What wide difference, therefore, in the ſentiments of morals, muſt be found between civilized nations and Barbarians, or between nations whoſe characters have little in common? How ſhall we pretend to fix a ſtandard for judgments of this nature?

By tracing matters, replied I, a little higher, and examining the firſt principles, which each nation eſtabliſhes, of blame or cenſure. The Rhine flows north, the Rhone ſouth; yet both ſpring from the ſame mountain, and are alſo actuated, in their oppoſite directions, by the ſame principle of gravity. The different inclinations of the ground, on which they run, cauſe all the difference of their courſes.

In how many circumſtances would an Athenian and a French man of merit certainly reſemble each other? Good ſenſe, knowledge, wit, eloquence, humanity, fidelity, truth, juſtice, courage, temperance, conſtancy, dignity of mind: Theſe you have all omitted; in order to inſiſt only on the points in which they may, by accident, differ. Very well: I am willing to comply with you; and ſhall endeavour to account for theſe differences, from the moſt univerſal, eſtabliſhed principles of morals.

The Greek loves, I care not to examine more particularly. I ſhall only obſerve, that however blameable, they aroſe from a very innocent cauſe, the frequency of the gymnaſtic exerciſes among that people; and were recommended, though abſurdly, as the ſource of friendſhip, ſympathy, mutual attachment, and fidelity *; qualities eſteemed in all nations and all ages.

The marriage of half-brothers and ſiſters ſeems no great difficulty. Love between the nearer relations is contrary to reaſon and public utility; but the preciſe point,

* Plat. ſymp. p. 182. Ex edit. Ser.

point, where we are to ſtop, can ſcarcely be determined by natural reaſon; and is therefore a very proper ſubject for municipal law or cuſtom. If the Athenians went a little too far on the one ſide, the canon law has ſurely puſhed matters a great way into the other extreme *.

Had you aſked a parent at Athens, why he bereaved his child of that life which he had ſo lately given it? It is becauſe I love it, he would reply; and regard the poverty which it muſt inherit from me, as a greater evil than death, which it is not capable of dreading, feeling, or reſenting †.

How is public liberty, the moſt valuable of all bleſſings, to be recovered from the hands of an uſurper or tyrant, if his power ſhields him from public rebellion, and our ſcruples from private vengeance? That his crime is capital by law, you acknowledge: And muſt the higheſt aggravation of his crime, the putting of himſelf above law, form his full ſecurity? You can reply nothing, but by ſhowing the great inconveniences of aſſaſſination; which could any one have proved clearly to the ancients, he had reformed their ſentiments in this particular.

Again, to caſt your eye on the picture which I have drawn of modern manners; there is almoſt as great difficulty, I acknowledge, to juſtify French as Greek gallantry; except only, that the former is much more natural and agreeable than the latter. But our neighbours, it ſeems, have reſolved to ſacrifice ſome of the domeſtic to the ſociable pleaſures; and to prefer eaſe, freedom, and an open commerce, to a ſtrict fidelity and conſtancy. Theſe ends are both good, and are

* See Inquiry, Sect. IV. † PLUT. de amore prolis, ſub fine.

ſomewhat difficult to reconcile; nor need we be ſurpriſed, if the cuſtoms of nations incline too much, ſometimes to the one ſide, ſometimes to the other.

The moſt inviolable attachment to the laws of our country is every where acknowledged a capital virtue; and where the people are not ſo happy as to have any legiſlature but a ſingle perſon, the ſtricteſt loyalty is, in that caſe, the trueſt patriotiſm.

Nothing ſurely can be more abſurd and barbarous than the practice of duelling; but thoſe who juſtify it, ſay, that it begets civility and good manners. And a duelliſt, you may obſerve, always values himſelf upon his courage, his ſenſe of honour, his fidelity and friendſhip; qualities which are here indeed very oddly directed, but which have been eſteemed univerſally ſince the foundation of the world.

Have the gods forbid ſelf-murder? An Athenian allows that it ought to be forborn. Has the Deity permitted it? A Frenchman allows that death is preferable to pain and infamy.

You ſee then, continued I, that the principles upon which men reaſon in morals are always the ſame; though the concluſions which they draw are often very different. That they all reaſon aright with regard to this ſubject, more than with regard to any other, it is not incumbent on any moraliſt to ſhow. It is ſufficient, that the original principles of cenſure or blame are uniform, and that erroneous concluſions can be corrected by ſounder reaſoning and larger experience. Though many ages have elapſed ſince the fall of Greece and Rome; though many changes have arrived in religion, language, laws, and cuſtoms; none of theſe revolutions has ever produced any conſiderable innovation in the primary ſentiments of morals,

rals, more than in thoſe of external beauty. Some minute differences, perhaps, may be obſerved in both. Horace * celebrates a low forehead, and Anacreon joined eye-brows †: But the Apollo and the Venus of antiquity are ſtill our models for male and female beauty; in like manner as the character of Scipio continues our ſtandard for the glory of heroes, and that of Cornelia for the honour of matrons.

It appears, that there never was any quality recommended by any one, as a virtue or moral excellence, but on account of its being uſeful or agreeable to a man himſelf, or to others. For what other reaſon can ever be aſſigned for praiſe or approbation? Or where would be the ſenſe of extolling a good character or action, which, at the ſame time, is allowed to be good for nothing? All the differences, therefore, in morals, may be reduced to this one general foundation, and may be accounted for by the different views which people take of theſe circumſtances.

Sometimes men differ in their judgment about the uſefulneſs of any habit or action: Sometimes alſo the peculiar circumſtances of things render one moral quality more uſeful than others, and give it a peculiar preference.

It is not ſurpriſing, that, during a period of war and diſorder, the military virtues ſhould be more celebrated than the pacific, and attract more the admiration and attention of mankind. "How uſual is it," ſays Tully ‡, "to find Cimbrians, Celtiberians, and "other Barbarians, who bear, with inflexible con-"ſtancy, all the fatigues and dangers of the field;

* Epiſt. lib. i. epiſt. 7. Alſo lib. i. ode 3.

† Ode 28. PETRONIUS (cap. 86.) joins both theſe circumſtances as beauties.

‡ Tuſc. Quæſt. lib. ii.

" but are immediately diſpirited under the pain and " hazard of a languiſhing diſtemper: While, on the " other hand, the Greeks patiently endure the ſlow " approaches of death, when armed with ſickneſs and " diſeaſe; but timorouſly fly his preſence, when he " attacks them violently with ſwords and falchions!" So different is even the ſame virtue of courage among warlike or peaceful nations! And indeed we may obſerve, that, as the difference between war and peace is the greateſt that ariſes among nations and public ſocieties, it produces alſo the greateſt variations in moral ſentiment, and diverſifies the moſt our ideas of virtue and perſonal merit.

Sometimes too, magnanimity, greatneſs of mind, diſdain of ſlavery, inflexible rigour and integrity, may better ſuit the circumſtances of one age than thoſe of another, and have a more kindly influence, both on public affairs, and on a man's own ſafety and advancement. Our idea of merit, therefore, will alſo vary a little with theſe variations; and Labeo, perhaps, be cenſured for the ſame qualities which procured Cato the higheſt approbation.

A degree of luxury may be ruinous and pernicious in a native of Switzerland, which only foſters the arts, and encourages induſtry, in a Frenchman or Engliſhman. We are not, therefore, to expect, either the ſame ſentiments or the ſame laws in Berne, which prevail in London or Paris.

Different cuſtoms have alſo ſome influence as well as different utilities; and by giving an early bias to the mind, may produce a ſuperior propenſity, either to the uſeful or the agreeable qualities; to thoſe which regard ſelf, or thoſe which extend to ſociety. Theſe four ſources of moral ſentiment ſtill ſubſiſt; but particular

cular accidents may, at one time, make any one of them flow with greater abundance than at another.

The cuſtoms of ſome nations ſhut up the women from all ſocial commerce: Thoſe of others make them ſo eſſential a part of ſociety and converſation, that, except where buſineſs is tranſacted, the male-ſex alone are ſuppoſed almoſt wholly incapable of mutual diſcourſe and entertainment. As this difference is the moſt material that can happen in private life, it muſt alſo produce the greateſt variation in our moral ſentiments.

Of all nations in the world, where polygamy was not allowed, the Greeks ſeem to have been the moſt reſerved in their commerce with the fair ſex, and to have impoſed on them the ſtricteſt laws of modeſty and decency. We have a ſtrong inſtance of this in an oration of Lyſias *. A widow injured, ruined, undone, calls a meeting of a few of her neareſt friends and relations; and though never before accuſtomed, ſays the orator, to ſpeak in the preſence of men, the diſtreſs of her circumſtances conſtrained her to lay the caſe before them. The very opening of her mouth in ſuch company required, it ſeems, an apology.

When Demoſthenes proſecuted his tutors, to make them refund his patrimony, it became neceſſary for him, in the courſe of the law-ſuit, to prove that the marriage of Aphobus's ſiſter with Oneter was entirely fraudulent, and that, notwithſtanding her ſham-marriage, ſhe had lived with her brother at Athens for two years paſt, ever ſince her divorce from her former huſband. And it is remarkable, that though theſe were people of the firſt fortune and diſtinction in the city, the orator could prove this fact no way, but by calling

* Orat. 33.

calling for her female ſlaves to be put to the queſtion, and by the evidence of one phyſician, who had ſeen her in her brother's houſe during her illneſs *. So reſerved were Greek manners.

We may be aſſured, that an extreme purity of manners was the conſequence of this reſerve. Accordingly we find, that, except the fabulous ſtories of an Helen and a Clytemneſtra, there ſcarcely is an inſtance of any event in the Greek hiſtory which proceeded from the intrigues of women. On the other hand, in modern times, particularly in a neighbouring nation, the females enter into all tranſactions and all management of church and ſtate: And no man can expect ſucceſs, who takes not care to obtain their good graces. Harry the third, by incurring the diſpleaſure of the fair, endangered his crown, and loſt his life, as much as by his indulgence to hereſy.

It is needleſs to diſſemble: The conſequence of a very free commerce between the ſexes, and of their living much together, will often terminate in intrigues and gallantry. We muſt ſacrifice ſomewhat of the uſeful, if we be very anxious to obtain all the agreeable, qualities; and cannot pretend to reach alike every kind of advantage. Inſtances of licence, daily multiplying, will weaken the ſcandal with the one ſex, and teach the other, by degrees, to adopt the famous maxim of La Fontaine, with regard to female infidelity: "That if one knows it, it is but a ſmall matter; "if one knows it not, it is nothing †."

Some people are inclined to think, that the beſt way of adjuſting all differences, and of keeping the proper

* In Oneterem.

† Quand on le ſçait, c'eſt peu de choſe;
Quand on l'ignore, ce n'eſt rien.

proper medium between the agreeable and the uſeful qualities of the ſex, is to live with them after the manner of the Romans and the Engliſh (for the cuſtoms of theſe two nations ſeem ſimilar in this reſpect †); that is, without gallantry ‡, and without jealouſy. By a parity of reaſon, the cuſtoms of the Spaniards and of the Italians of an age ago (for the preſent are very different), muſt be the worſt of any; becauſe they favour both gallantry and jealouſy.

Nor will theſe different cuſtoms of nations affect the one ſex only: Their idea of perſonal merit in the males muſt alſo be ſomewhat different with regard, at leaſt, to converſation, addreſs, and humour. The one nation, where the men live much apart, will naturally more approve of prudence; the other of gaiety. With the one, ſimplicity of manners will be in the higheſt eſteem; with the other, politeneſs. The one will diſtinguiſh themſelves by good ſenſe and judgment; the other, by taſte and delicacy. The eloquence of the former will ſhine moſt in the ſenate; that of the other, on the theatre.

Theſe, I ſay, are the natural effects of ſuch cuſtoms. For it muſt be confeſſed, that chance has a great influence on national manners; and many events happen in ſociety, which are not to be accounted for by general rules. Who could imagine, for inſtance, that the Romans, who lived freely with their women, ſhould be very indifferent about muſic, and eſteem dancing infamous: While the Greeks, who never almoſt ſaw a woman but in their own houſes, were continually piping, ſinging, and dancing?

The

† See Note [XX].

‡ The gallantry here meant, is that of amours and attachments, not that of complaiſance; which is as much paid to the fair-ſex in England as in any other country.

The differences of moral ſentiment, which naturally ariſe from a republican or monarchical government, are alſo very obvious; as well as thoſe which proceed from general riches or poverty, union or faction, ignorance or learning. I ſhall conclude this long diſcourſe with obſerving, that different cuſtoms and ſituations vary not the original ideas of merit (however they may ſome conſequences), in any very eſſential point, and prevail chiefly with regard to young men, who can aſpire to the agreeable qualities, and may attempt to pleaſe. The MANNER, the ORNAMENTS, the GRACES, which ſucceed in this ſhape, are more arbitrary and caſual: But the merit of riper years is almoſt every where the ſame; and conſiſts chiefly in integrity, humanity, ability, knowledge, and the other more ſolid and uſeful qualities of the human mind.

What you inſiſt on, replied Palamedes, may have ſome foundation, when you adhere to the maxims of common life and ordinary conduct. Experience and the practice of the world, readily correct any great extravagance on either ſide. But what ſay you to artificial lives and manners? How do you reconcile the maxims on which, in different ages and nations, theſe are founded?

What do you underſtand by artificial lives and manners? ſaid I. I explain myſelf, replied he. You know, that religion had, in ancient times, very little influence on common life; and that, after men had performed their duty in ſacrifices and prayers at the temple, they thought, that the gods left the reſt of their conduct to themſelves, and were little pleaſed or offended with thoſe virtues or vices, which only affected the peace and happineſs of human ſociety. In thoſe ages, it was the buſineſs of philoſophy alone to regulate mens ordinary

nary behaviour and deportment; and accordingly, we may obſerve, that this being the ſole principle, by which a man could elevate himſelf above his fellows, it acquired a mighty aſcendant over many, and produced great ſingularities of maxims and of conduct. At preſent, when philoſophy has loſt the allurement of novelty, it has no ſuch extenſive influence; but ſeems to confine itſelf moſtly to ſpeculations in the cloſet; in the ſame manner as the ancient religion was limited to ſacrifices in the temple. Its place is now ſupplied by the modern religion, which inſpects our whole conduct, and preſcribes an univerſal rule to our actions, to our words, to our very thoughts and inclinations; a rule ſo much the more auſtere, as it is guarded by infinite, though diſtant, rewards and puniſhments; and no infraction of it can ever be concealed or diſguiſed.

Diogenes is the moſt celebrated model of extravagant philoſophy. Let us ſeek a parallel to him in modern times. We ſhall not diſgrace any philoſophic name by a compariſon with the Dominics or Loyolas, or any canonized monk or friar. Let us compare him to Paſcal, a man of parts and genius as well as Diogenes himſelf; and perhaps, too, a man of virtue, had he allowed his virtuous inclinations to have exerted and diſplayed themſelves.

The foundation of Diogenes's conduct was an endeavour to render himſelf an independent being, as much as poſſible, and to confine all his wants, and deſires, and pleaſures, within himſelf and his own mind: The aim of Paſcal was to keep a perpetual ſenſe of his dependence before his eyes, and never to forget his numberleſs wants and infirmities. The ancient ſupported himſelf by magnanimity, oſtentation, pride, and

and the idea of his own ſuperiority above his fellow-creatures. The modern made conſtant profeſſion of humility and abaſement, of the contempt and hatred of himſelf; and endeavoured to attain theſe ſuppoſed virtues, as far as they are attainable. The auſterities of the Greek were in order to inure himſelf to hardſhips, and prevent his ever ſuffering: Thoſe of the Frenchman were embraced merely for their own ſake, and in order to ſuffer as much as poſſible. The philoſopher indulged himſelf in the moſt beaſtly pleaſures, even in public: The ſaint refuſed himſelf the moſt innocent, even in private. The former thought it his duty to love his friends, and to rail at them, and reprove them, and ſcold them: The latter endeavoured to be abſolutely indifferent towards his neareſt relations, and to love and ſpeak well of his enemies. The great object of Diogenes's wit was every kind of ſuperſtition; that is, every kind of religion known in his time. The mortality of the ſoul was his ſtandard principle; and even his ſentiments of a divine providence ſeem to have been licentious. The moſt ridiculous ſuperſtitions directed Paſcal's faith and practice; and an extreme contempt of this life, in compariſon of the future, was the chief foundation of his conduct.

In ſuch a remarkable contraſt do theſe two men ſtand: Yet both of them have met with general admiration in their different ages, and have been propoſed as models of imitation. Where then is the univerſal ſtandard of morals which you talk of? And what rule ſhall we eſtabliſh for the many different, nay contrary, ſentiments of mankind?

An experiment, ſaid I, which ſucceeds in the air, will not always ſucceed in a vacuum. When men depart from the maxims of common reaſon, and affect

theſe

theſe artificial lives, as you call them, no one can anſwer for what will pleaſe or diſpleaſe them. They are in a different element from the reſt of mankind; and the natural principles of their mind play not with the ſame regularity, as if left to themſelves, free from the illuſions of religious ſuperſtition, or philoſophical enthuſiaſm.

THE

THE

NATURAL HISTORY

OF

RELIGION.

INTRODUCTION.

AS every inquiry which regards religion is of the utmoſt importance, there are two queſtions in particular which challenge our attention, to wit, that concerning its foundation in reaſon, and that concerning its origin in human nature. Happily, the firſt queſtion, which is the moſt important, admits of the moſt obvious, at leaſt, the cleareſt ſolution. The whole frame of nature beſpeaks an Intelligent Author; and no rational inquirer can, after ſerious reflection, ſuſpend his belief a moment with regard to the primary principles of genuine Theiſm and Religion. But the other queſtion, concerning the origin of religion in human nature, is expoſed to ſome more difficulty. The

The belief of invisible, intelligent power, has been very generally diffused over the human race, in all places, and in all ages; but it has neither, perhaps, been so universal as to admit of no exception, nor has it been, in any degree, uniform in the ideas which it has suggested. Some nations have been discovered, who entertained no sentiments of Religion, if travellers and historians may be credited; and no two nations, and scarce any two men, have ever agreed precisely in the same sentiments. It would appear, therefore, that this preconception springs not from an original instinct or primary impression of nature, such as gives rise to self-love, affection between the sexes, love of progeny, gratitude, resentment; since every instinct of this kind has been found absolutely universal in all nations and ages, and has always a precise determinate object which it inflexibly pursues. The first religious principles must be secondary, such as may easily be perverted by various accidents and causes, and whose operation, too, in some cases, may, by an extraordinary concurrence of circumstances, be altogether prevented. What those principles are which give rise to the original belief, and what those accidents and causes are which direct its operation, is the subject of our present inquiry.

SECT. I. *That Polytheism was the primary Religion of Men.*

IT appears to me, that if we consider the improvement of human society, from rude beginnings to a state of greater perfection, polytheism, or idolatry was, and necessarily must have been, the first and most ancient

religion of mankind. This opinion I ſhall endeavour to confirm by the following arguments.

It is a matter of fact inconteſtible, that about 1700 years ago, all mankind were polytheiſts. The doubtful and ſceptical principles of a few philoſophers, or the theiſm, and that too not entirely pure, of one or two nations, form no objection worth regarding. Behold then the clear teſtimony of hiſtory. The farther we mount up into antiquity, the more do we find mankind plunged into polytheiſm. No marks, no ſymptoms of any more perfect religion. The moſt ancient records of human race ſtill preſent us with that ſyſtem as the popular and eſtabliſhed creed. The north, the ſouth, the eaſt, the weſt, give their unanimous teſtimony to the ſame fact. What can be oppoſed to ſo full an evidence?

As far as writing or hiſtory reaches, mankind, in ancient times, appear univerſally to have been polytheiſts. Shall we aſſert, that in more ancient times, before the knowledge of letters, or the diſcovery of any art or ſcience, men entertained the principles of pure theiſm? That is, while they were ignorant and barbarous, they diſcovered truth; but fell into error as ſoon as they acquired learning and politeneſs.

But in this aſſertion, you not only contradict all appearance of probability, but alſo our preſent experience concerning the principles and opinions of barbarous nations. The ſavage tribes of America, Africa, and Aſia, are all idolaters. Not a ſingle exception to this rule: Inſomuch, that were a traveller to tranſport himſelf into any unknown region, if he found inhabitants cultivated with arts and ſciences, though even upon that ſuppoſition there are odds againſt their being theiſts, yet could he not ſafely, till farther inquiry, pronounce any

any thing on that head: But if he found them ignorant and barbarous, he might beforehand declare them idolaters; and there ſcarcely is a poſſibility of his being miſtaken.

It ſeems certain, that, according to the natural progreſs of human thought, the ignorant multitude muſt firſt entertain ſome groveling and familiar notion of ſuperior powers, before they ſtretch their conception to that perfect Being, who beſtowed order on the whole frame of nature. We may as reaſonably imagine, that men inhabited palaces before huts and cottages, or ſtudied geometry before agriculture; as aſſert that the Deity appeared to them a pure ſpirit, omniſcient, omnipotent, and omnipreſent, before he was apprehended to be a powerful, though limited being, with human paſſions and appetites, limbs and organs. The mind riſes gradually from inferior to ſuperior: By abſtracting from what is imperfect, it forms an idea of perfection: And ſlowly diſtinguiſhing the nobler parts of its own frame from the groſſer, it learns to transfer only the former, much elevated and refined, to its divinity. Nothing could diſturb this natural progreſs of thought, but ſome obvious and invincible argument, which might immediately lead the mind into the pure principles of theiſm, and make it overleap, at one bound, the vaſt interval which is interpoſed between the human and the divine nature. But though I allow, that the order and frame of the univerſe, when accurately examined, affords ſuch an argument; yet I can never think, that this conſideration could have an influence on mankind, when they formed their firſt rude notions of religion.

The cauſes of ſuch objects, as are quite familiar to us, never ſtrike our attention or curioſity; and how-

ever extraordinary or ſurpriſing theſe objects in themſelves, they are paſſed over, by the raw and ignorant multitude, without much examination or inquiry. Adam, riſing at once, in paradiſe, and in the full perfection of his faculties, would naturally, as repreſented by Milton, be aſtoniſhed at the glorious appearances of nature, the heavens, the air, the earth, his own organs and members; and would be led to aſk, whence this wonderful ſcene aroſe? But a barbarous, neceſſitous animal (ſuch as a man is on the firſt origin of ſociety), preſſed by ſuch numerous wants and paſſions, has no leiſure to admire the regular face of nature, or make inquiries concerning the cauſe of thoſe objects, to which, from his infancy, he has been gradually accuſtomed. On the contrary, the more regular and uniform, that is, the more perfect nature appears, the more is he familiarized to it, and the leſs inclined to ſcrutinize and examine it. A monſtrous birth excites his curioſity, and is deemed a prodigy. It alarms him from its novelty; and immediately ſets him a trembling, and ſacrificing, and praying. But an animal, complete in all its limbs and organs, is to him an ordinary ſpectacle, and produces no religious opinion or affection. Aſk him, whence that animal aroſe? he will tell you, from the copulation of its parents. And theſe, whence? From the copulation of theirs. A few removes ſatisfy his curioſity, and ſet the objects at ſuch a diſtance, that he entirely loſes ſight of them. Imagine not, that he will ſo much as ſtart the queſtion, whence the firſt animal; much leſs, whence the whole ſyſtem or united fabric of the univerſe aroſe. Or if you ſtart ſuch a queſtion to him, expect not that he will employ his mind with any anxiety about a ſubject, ſo remote, ſo unintereſting,

unintereſting, and which ſo much exceeds the bounds of his capacity.

But farther, if men were at firſt led into the belief of one Supreme Being, by reaſoning from the frame of nature, they could never poſſibly leave that belief, in order to embrace polytheiſm; but the ſame principles of reaſon, which at firſt produced and diffuſed over mankind ſo magnificent an opinion, muſt be able, with greater facility, to preſerve it. The firſt invention and proof of any doctrine is much more difficult than the ſupporting and retaining of it.

There is a great difference between hiſtorical facts and ſpeculative opinions; nor is the knowledge of the one propagated in the ſame manner with that of the other. An hiſtorical fact, while it paſſes by oral tradition from eye-witneſſes and contemporaries, is diſguiſed in every ſucceſſive narration, and may at laſt retain but very ſmall, if any, reſemblance of the original truth on which it was founded. The frail memories of men, their love of exaggeration, their ſupine careleſſneſs; theſe principles, if not corrected by books and writing, ſoon pervert the account of hiſtorical events; where argument or reaſoning has little or no place, nor can ever recal the truth, which has once eſcaped thoſe narrations. It is thus the fables of Hercules, Theſeus, Bacchus, are ſuppoſed to have been originally founded in true hiſtory, corrupted by tradition. But with regard to ſpeculative opinions, the caſe is far otherwiſe. If theſe opinions be founded on arguments ſo clear and obvious, as to carry conviction with the generality of mankind, the ſame arguments which at firſt diffuſed the opinions, will ſtill preſerve them in their original purity. If the arguments be more abſtruſe, and more remote from vulgar appre-

henſion, the opinions will always be confined to a few perſons; and as ſoon as men leave the contemplation of the arguments, the opinions will immediately be loſt, and be buried in oblivion. Whichever ſide of this dilemma we take, it muſt appear impoſſible, that theiſm could, from reaſoning, have been the primary religion of human race, and have afterwards, by its corruption, given birth to polytheiſm, and to all the various ſuperſtitions of the heathen world. Reaſon, when obvious, prevents theſe corruptions: when abſtruſe, it keeps the principles entirely from the knowledge of the vulgar, who are alone liable to corrupt any principle or opinion.

SECT. II. *Origin of Polytheiſm.*

IF we would, therefore, indulge our curioſity in inquiring concerning the origin of religion, we muſt turn our thoughts towards polytheiſm, the primitive religion of uninſtructed mankind.

Were men led into the apprehenſion of inviſible, intelligent power, by a contemplation of the works of nature, they could never poſſibly entertain any conception but of one ſingle being, who beſtowed exiſtence and order on this vaſt machine, and adjuſted all its parts, according to one regular plan or connected ſyſtem. For though, to perſons of a certain turn of mind, it may not appear altogether abſurd, that ſeveral independent beings, endowed with ſuperior wiſdom, might conſpire in the contrivance and execution of one regular plan; yet is this a merely arbitrary ſuppoſition, which, even if allowed poſſible, muſt be confeſſed neither to be ſupported by probability nor neceſſity.

All

All things in the univerſe are evidently of a piece. Every thing is adjuſted to every thing. One deſign prevails throughout the whole. And this uniformity leads the mind to acknowledge one author; becauſe the conception of different authors, without any diſtinction of attributes or operations, ſerves only to give perplexity to the imagination, without beſtowing any ſatisfaction on the underſtanding. The ſtatue of Laocoon, as we learn from Pliny, was the work of three artiſts: But it is certain that, were we not told ſo, we ſhould never have imagined that a groupe of figures, cut from one ſtone, and united in one plan, was not the work and contrivance of one ſtatuary. To aſcribe any ſingle effect to the combination of ſeveral cauſes, is not ſurely a natural and obvious ſuppoſition.

On the other hand, if, leaving the works of nature, we trace the footſteps of inviſible power in the various and contrary events of human life, we are neceſſarily led into polytheiſm, and to the acknowledgment of ſeveral limited and imperfect deities. Storms and tempeſts ruin what is nouriſhed by the ſun. The ſun deſtroys what is foſtered by the moiſture of dews and rains. War may be favourable to a nation, whom the inclemency of the ſeaſons afflicts with famine. Sickneſs and peſtilence may depopulate a kingdom amidſt the moſt profuſe plenty. The ſame nation is not, at the ſame time, equally ſucceſsful by ſea and by land. And a nation which now triumphs over its enemies, may anon ſubmit to their more proſperous arms. In ſhort, the conduct of events, or what we call the plan of a particular providence, is ſo full of variety and uncertainty, that, if we ſuppoſe it immediately ordered by any intelligent beings, we muſt acknowledge a contrariety in their deſigns and intentions, a conſtant combat

of oppoſite powers, and a repentance or change of intention in the ſame power, from impotence or levity. Each nation has its tutelar deity. Each element is ſubjected to its inviſible power or agent. The province of each god is ſeparate from that of another. Nor are the operations of the ſame god always certain and invariable. To-day he protects; to-morrow he abandons us. Prayers and ſacrifices, rites and ceremonies, well or ill performed, are the ſources of his favour or enmity, and produce all the good or ill fortune which are to be found amongſt mankind.

We may conclude, therefore, that, in all nations which have embraced polytheiſm, the firſt ideas of religion aroſe not from a contemplation of the works of nature, but from a concern with regard to the events of life, and from the inceſſant hopes and fears which actuate the human mind. Accordingly, we find, that all idolaters, having ſeparated the provinces of their deities, have recourſe to that inviſible agent, to whoſe authority they are immediately ſubjected, and whoſe province it is to ſuperintend that courſe of actions in which they are at any time engaged. Juno is invoked at marriages; Lucina at births. Neptune receives the prayers of ſeamen; and Mars of warriors. The huſbandman cultivates his field under the protection of Ceres; and the merchant acknowledges the authority of Mercury. Each natural event is ſuppoſed to be governed by ſome intelligent agent; and nothing proſperous or adverſe can happen in life, which may not be the ſubject of peculiar prayers or thankſgivings *.

It muſt neceſſarily, indeed, be allowed, that, in order to carry mens attention beyond the preſent courſe of things,

* See Note [YY].

things, or lead them into any inference concerning invisible intelligent power, they must be actuated by some passion which prompts their thought and reflection; some motive which urges their first inquiry. But what passion shall we here have recourse to, for explaining an effect of such mighty consequence? Not speculative curiosity, surely, or the pure love of truth. That motive is too refined for such gross apprehensions; and would lead men into inquiries concerning the frame of nature; a subject too large and comprehensive for their narrow capacities. No passions, therefore, can be supposed to work upon such barbarians, but the ordinary affections of human life; the anxious concern for happiness, the dread of future misery, the terror of death, the thirst of revenge, the appetite for food and other necessaries. Agitated by hopes and fears of this nature, especially the latter, men scrutinize, with a trembling curiosity, the course of future causes, and examine the various and contrary events of human life. And in this disordered scene, with eyes still more disordered and astonished, they see the first obscure traces of divinity.

SECT. III. *The same Subject continued.*

WE are placed in this world, as in a great theatre, where the true springs and causes of every event are entirely concealed from us; nor have we either sufficient wisdom to foresee, or power to prevent, those ills with which we are continually threatened. We hang in perpetual suspense between life and death, health and sickness, plenty and want; which are distributed amongst the human species by secret and unknown causes,

cauſes, whoſe operation is oft unexpected, and always unaccountable. Theſe unknown cauſes, then, become the conſtant object of our hope and fear; and while the paſſions are kept in perpetual alarm by an anxious expectation of the events, the imagination is equally employed in forming ideas of thoſe powers on which we have ſo entire a dependence. Could men anatomize nature according to the moſt probable, at leaſt, the moſt intelligible philoſophy, they would find, that theſe cauſes are nothing but the particular fabric and ſtructure of the minute parts of their own bodies, and of external objects; and that, by a regular and conſtant machinery, all the events are produced, about which they are ſo much concerned. But this philoſophy exceeds the comprehenſion of the ignorant multitude, who can only conceive the unknown cauſes in a general and confuſed manner; though their imagination, perpetually employed on the ſame ſubject, muſt labour to form ſome particular and diſtinct idea of them. The more they conſider theſe cauſes themſelves, and the uncertainty of their operation, the leſs ſatisfaction do they meet with in their reſearches; and, however unwilling, they muſt at laſt have abandoned ſo arduous an attempt, were it not for a propenſity in human nature, which leads into a ſyſtem that gives them ſome ſatisfaction.

There is an univerſal tendency among mankind to conceive all beings like themſelves, and to transfer to every object thoſe qualities with which they are familiarly acquainted, and of which they are intimately conſcious. We find human faces in the moon, armies in the clouds; and by a natural propenſity, if not corrected by experience and reflection, aſcribe malice or good will to every thing that hurts or pleaſes us. Hence the

the frequency and beauty of the *proſopopœia* in poetry; where trees, mountains, and ſtreams, are perſonified, and the inanimate parts of nature acquire ſentiment and paſſion. And though theſe poetical figures and expreſſions gain not on the belief, they may ſerve, at leaſt, to prove a certain tendency in the imagination, without which they could neither be beautiful nor natural. Nor is a river-god or hamadryad always taken for a mere poetical or imaginary perſonage; but may ſometimes enter into the real creed of the ignorant vulgar; while each grove or field is repreſented as poſſeſſed of a particular genius or inviſible power, which inhabits and protects it. Nay, philoſophers cannot entirely exempt themſelves from this natural frailty; but have oft aſcribed to inanimate matter the horror of a vacuum, ſympathies, antipathies, and other affections of human nature. The abſurdity is not leſs, while we caſt our eyes upwards; and transferring, as is too uſual, human paſſions and infirmities to the Deity, repreſent him as jealous and revengeful, capricious and partial, and, in ſhort, a wicked and fooliſh man, in every reſpect but his ſuperior power and authority. No wonder, then, that mankind, being placed in ſuch an abſolute ignorance of cauſes, and being, at the ſame time, ſo anxious concerning their future fortune, ſhould immediately acknowledge a dependence on inviſible powers, poſſeſſed of ſentiment and intelligence. The unknown cauſes, which continually employ their thought, appearing always in the ſame aſpect, are all apprehended to be of the ſame kind or ſpecies. Nor is it long before we aſcribe to them thought and reaſon and paſſion, and ſometimes even the limbs and figures of men, in order to bring them nearer to a reſemblance with ourſelves.

In proportion as any man's courſe of life is governed by accident, we always find, that he increaſes in ſuperſtition; as may particularly be obſerved of gameſters and ſailors; who, though, of all mankind, the leaſt capable of ſerious reflection, abound moſt in frivolous and ſuperſtitious apprehenſions. The gods, ſays Coriolanus in Dionyſius *, have an influence in every affair; but above all, in war; where the event is ſo uncertain. All human life, eſpecially before the inſtitution of order and good government, being ſubject to fortuitous accidents; it is natural, that ſuperſtition ſhould prevail every where in barbarous ages, and put men on the moſt earneſt inquiry concerning thoſe inviſible powers, who diſpoſe of their happineſs or miſery. Ignorant of aſtronomy and the anatomy of plants and animals, and too little curious to obſerve the admirable adjuſtment of final cauſes, they remain ſtill unacquainted with a firſt and ſupreme Creator, and with that infinitely perfect ſpirit, who alone, by his almighty will, beſtowed order on the whole frame of nature. Such a magnificent idea is too big for their narrow conceptions, which can neither obſerve the beauty of the work, nor comprehend the grandeur of its author. They ſuppoſe their deities, however potent and inviſible, to be nothing but a ſpecies of human creatures, perhaps raiſed from among mankind, and retaining all human paſſions and appetites, together with corporeal limbs and organs. Such limited beings, though maſters of human fate, being, each of them, incapable of extending his influence every where, muſt be vaſtly multiplied, in order to anſwer that variety of events which happen over the whole face of nature. Thus every place is ſtored with a crowd of local deities; and

* Lib. viii.

and thus polytheiſm has prevailed, and ſtill prevails, among the greateſt part of uninſtructed mankind *.

Any of the human affections may lead us into the notion of inviſible, intelligent power; hope as well as fear, gratitude as well as affliction: But if we examine our own hearts, or obſerve what paſſes around us, we ſhall find, that men are much oftener thrown on their knees by the melancholy than by the agreeable paſſions. Proſperity is eaſily received as our due, and few queſtions are aſked concerning its cauſe or author. It begets cheerfulneſs and activity and alacrity, and a lively enjoyment of every ſocial and ſenſual pleaſure: And during this ſtate of mind, men have little leiſure or inclination to think of the unknown inviſible regions. On the other hand, every diſaſtrous accident alarms us, and ſets us on inquiries concerning the principles whence it aroſe: Apprehenſions ſpring up with regard to futurity: And the mind, ſunk into diffidence, terror, and melancholy, has recourſe to every method of appeaſing thoſe ſecret intelligent powers, on whom our fortune is ſuppoſed entirely to depend.

No topic is more uſual with all popular divines than to diſplay the advantages of affliction, in bringing men to a due ſenſe of religion; by ſubduing their confidence and ſenſuality, which, in times of proſperity, make them forgetful of a divine providence. Nor is this

* The following lines of Euripides are ſo much to the preſent purpoſe, that I cannot forbear quoting them:

Ουκ εστιν ουδεν σαυτον, ως τυδοξια,
Ουτ' αν καλως πρασσουσα μη πραξειν κακως.
Φυρουσι δ' ανθ'οις θεοι παλιν τε και προσω,
Ταραγμον εντιθεντες, ως αγνοια
Σεβωμεν αυτους. HECUBA.

"There is nothing ſecure in the world; no glory, no proſperity. The gods "toſs all life into confuſion; mix every thing with its reverſe; that all of us, "from our ignorance and uncertainty, may pay them the more worſhip and re- "verence."

this topic confined merely to modern religions. The ancients have alſo employed it. "Fortune has never liberally, without envy," ſays a Greek hiſtorian *, "beſtowed an unmixed happineſs on mankind; but, with all her gifts, has ever conjoined ſome diſaſtrous circumſtance, in order to chaſtiſe men into a reverence for the gods, whom, in a continued courſe of proſperity, they are apt to neglect and forget."

What age or period of life, is the moſt addicted to ſuperſtition? The weakeſt and moſt timid. What ſex? The ſame anſwer muſt be given. "The leaders and examples of every kind of ſuperſtition," ſays Strabo †, "are the women. Theſe excite the men to devotion and ſupplications, and the obſervance of religious days. It is rare to meet with one that lives apart from the females, and yet is addicted to ſuch practices. And nothing can, for this reaſon, be more improbable, than the account given of an order of men among the Getes, who practiſed celibacy, and were notwithſtanding the moſt religious fanatics." A method of reaſoning, which would lead us to entertain a bad idea of the devotion of monks; did we not know by an experience, not ſo common, perhaps, in Strabo's days, that one may practiſe celibacy, and profeſs chaſtity; and yet maintain the cloſeſt connections and moſt entire ſympathy with that timorous and pious ſex.

SECT. IV. *Deities not conſidered as creators or formers of the world.*

THE only point of theology in which we ſhall find a conſent of mankind almoſt univerſal, is, that there is inviſible,

* Diod. Sic. lib. iii. † Lib. vii.

inviſible, intelligent power in the world: But whether this power be ſupreme or ſubordinate, whether confined to one being, or diſtributed among ſeveral, what attributes, qualities, connections, or principles of action, ought to be aſcribed to thoſe beings; concerning all theſe points, there is the wideſt difference in the popular ſyſtems of theology. Our anceſtors in Europe, before the revival of letters, believed, as we do at preſent, that there was one ſupreme God, the author of nature, whoſe power, though in itſelf uncontrollable, was yet often exerted by the interpoſition of his angels and ſubordinate miniſters, who executed his ſacred purpoſes. But they alſo believed, that all nature was full of other inviſible powers; fairies, goblins, elves, ſprights; beings ſtronger and mightier than men, but much inferior to the celeſtial natures, who ſurround the throne of God. Now, ſuppoſe that any one, in thoſe ages, had denied the exiſtence of God and of his angels; would not his impiety juſtly have deſerved the appellation of atheiſm, even though he had ſtill allowed, by ſome odd capricious reaſoning, that the popular ſtories of elves and fairies were juſt and well grounded? The difference, on the one hand, between ſuch a perſon and a genuine theiſt is infinitely greater than that, on the other, between him and one that abſolutely excludes all inviſible intelligent power. And it is a fallacy, merely from the caſual reſemblance of names, without any conformity of meaning, to rank ſuch oppoſite opinions under the ſame denomination.

To any one who conſiders juſtly of the matter, it will appear, that the gods of all polytheiſts are no better than the elves or fairies of our anceſtors, and merit as little any pious worſhip or veneration. Theſe pretended religioniſts are really a kind of ſuperſtitious atheiſts,

atheiſts, and acknowledge no being that correſponds to our idea of a deity. No firſt principle of mind or thought: No ſupreme government and adminiſtration: No divine contrivance or intention in the fabric of the world.

The Chineſe, when * their prayers are not anſwered, beat their idols. The deities of the Laplanders are any large ſtone which they meet with of an extraordinary ſhape †. The Egyptian mythologiſts, in order to account for animal worſhip, ſaid, that the gods, purſued by the violence of earth-born men, who were their enemies, had formerly been obliged to diſguiſe themſelves under the ſemblance of beaſts ‡. The Caunii, a nation in the Leſſer Aſia, reſolving to admit no ſtrange gods among them, regularly, at certain ſeaſons, aſſembled themſelves completely armed, beat the air with their lances, and proceeded in that manner to their frontiers; in order, as they ſaid, to expel the foreign deities §. "Not even the immortal Gods," ſaid ſome German nations to Cæſar, "are a match for the Suevi ‖."

Many ills, ſays Dione in Homer to Venus wounded by Diomede, many ills, my daughter, have the gods inflicted on men: And many ills, in return, have men inflicted on the gods **. We need but open any claſſic author to meet with theſe groſs repreſentations of the deities; and Longinus †† with reaſon obſerves, that ſuch ideas of the divine nature, if literally taken, contain a true atheiſm.

Some

* Pere le Compte. † Regnard, Voyage de Laponie.

‡ Diod. Sic. lib. i. Lucian. de Sacrificiis. Ovid alludes to the ſame tradition, Metam. lib. v. l. 321. So alſo Manilius, lib. iv.

§ Herodot. lib. i. ‖ Cæſ. Comment. de bello Gallico, lib. iv.

** Lib. ix. 382. †† Cap. ix.

Some writers * have been ſurpriſed, that the impieties of Ariſtophanes ſhould have been tolerated, nay publicly acted and applauded by the Athenians; a people ſo ſuperſtitious and ſo jealous of the public religion, that, at that very time, they put Socrates to death for his imagined incredulity. But theſe writers do not conſider, that the ludicrous, familiar images, under which the gods are repreſented by that comic poet, inſtead of appearing impious, were the genuine lights in which the ancients conceived their divinities. What conduct can be more criminal or mean, than that of Jupiter in the Amphitrion? Yet that play, which repreſented his gallant exploits, was ſuppoſed ſo agreeable to him, that it was always acted in Rome by public authority, when the ſtate was threatened with peſtilence, famine, or any general calamity †. The Romans ſuppoſed, that, like all old letchers, he would be highly pleaſed with the recital of his former feats of proweſs and vigour, and that no topic was ſo proper upon which to flatter his vanity.

The Lacedemonians, ſays Xenophon ‡, always during war, put up their petitions very early in the morning, in order to be beforehand with their enemies, and, by being the firſt ſollcitors, pre-engage the gods in their favour. We may gather from Seneca §, that it was uſual for the votaries in the temples, to make intereſt with the beadle or ſexton, that they might have a ſeat near the image of the deity, in order to be the beſt heard in their prayers and applications to him. The Tyrians, when beſieged by Alexander, threw chains on the ſtatue of Hercules, to prevent that deity

* Pere Brumoy, Theatre des Grecs; & Fontenelle, Hiſtoire des Oracles.

† Arnob. Lib. vii. ‡ De Laced. Rep. § Epiſt. xli.

from deſerting to the enemy *. Auguſtus, having twice loſt his fleet by ſtorms, forbade Neptune to be carried in proceſſion along with the other gods; and fancied, that he had ſufficiently revenged himſelf by that expedient †. After Germanicus's death, the people were ſo enraged at their gods, that they ſtoned them in their temples; and openly renounced all allegiance to them ‡.

To aſcribe the origin and fabric of the univerſe to theſe imperfect beings, never enters into the imagination of any polytheiſt or idolater. Heſiod, whoſe writings with thoſe of Homer, contained the canonical ſyſtem of the heathen §; Heſiod, I ſay, ſuppoſes gods and men to have ſprung equally from the unknown powers of nature ‖. And throughout the whole theogony of that author, Pandora is the only inſtance of creation, or a voluntary production; and ſhe too was formed by the gods merely from deſpight to Prometheus, who had furniſhed men with ſtolen fire from the celeſtial regions ¶. The ancient mythologiſts, indeed, ſeem throughout to have rather embraced the idea of generation, than that of creation or formation; and to have thence accounted for the origin of this univerſe.

Ovid, who lived in a learned age, and had been inſtructed by philoſophers in the principles of a divine creation or formation of the world; finding that ſuch an idea would not agree with the popular mythology which he delivers, leaves it, in a manner, looſe and detached from his ſyſtem. *Quiſquis fuit ille Deorum* **? Whichever

* Quint. Curtius, lib. iv. cap. 3. Diod. Sic. lib. xvii.

† Suet. in vita Aug. cap. 16. ‡ Id. in vita Cal. cap. 5.

§ Herodot. lib. ii. Lucian. *Jupiter confutatus, de luctu, Saturn. &c.*

‖ Ὡς ἀμοθεν γεγαασι θεοὶ θνητοί τ' ἀνθρωποι. Heſ. Opera & Dies, l. 108.

¶ Theog. l. 570. ** Metamorph. lib. i. l. 32.

Whichever of the gods it was, ſays he, that diſſipated the chaos, and introduced order into the univerſe: It could neither be Saturn, he knew, nor Jupiter, nor Neptune, nor any of the received deities of paganiſm. His theological ſyſtem had taught him nothing upon that head; and he leaves the matter equally undetermined.

Diodorus Siculus *, beginning his work with an enumeration of the moſt reaſonable opinions concerning the origin of the world, makes no mention of a deity or intelligent mind; though it is evident from his hiſtory, that he was much more prone to ſuperſtition than to irreligion. And in another paſſage †, talking of the Ichthyophagi, a nation in India, he ſays, that, there being ſo great difficulty in accounting for their deſcent, we muſt conclude them to be *aborigines*, without any beginning of their generation, propagating their race from all eternity; as ſome of the phyſiologers, in treating of the origin of nature, have juſtly obſerved. "But in ſuch ſubjects as theſe," adds the hiſtorian, "which exceed all human capacity, it may "well happen, that thoſe who diſcourſe the moſt, know "the leaſt; reaching a ſpecious appearance of truth in "their reaſonings, while extremely wide of the real "truth and matter of fact."

A ſtrange ſentiment in our eyes, to be embraced by a profeſſed and zealous religioniſt ‡! But it was merely by accident, that the queſtion concerning the origin

* Lib. i. † Id. Ibid.

‡ The ſame author, who can thus account for the origin of the world without a Deity, eſteems it impious to explain, from phyſical cauſes, the common accidents of life, earthquakes, inundations, and tempeſts; and devoutly aſcribes theſe to the anger of Jupiter or Neptune. A plain proof whence he derived his ideas of religion. See lib. xv. p. 364. Ex edit. Rhodomanni.

of the world did ever in ancient times enter into religious ſyſtems, or was treated of by theologers. The philoſophers alone made profeſſion of delivering ſyſtems of this kind; and it was pretty late too before theſe bethought themſelves of having recourſe to a mind or ſupreme intelligence, as the firſt cauſe of all. So far was it from being eſteemed prophane in thoſe days to account for the origin of things without a Deity, that Thales, Anaximenes, Heraclitus, and others, who embraced that ſyſtem of coſmogony, paſſed unqueſtioned; while Anaxagoras, the firſt undoubted theiſt among the philoſophers, was perhaps the firſt that ever was accuſed of atheiſm *.

We are told by Sextus Empiricus †, that Epicurus, when a boy, reading with his preceptor theſe verſes of Heſiod,

Eldeſt of beings, chaos, firſt aroſe;
Next earth, wide-ſtretch'd, the ſeat of all:

the young ſcholar firſt betrayed his inquiſitive genius, by aſking, "And chaos whence?" But was told by his preceptor, that he muſt have recourſe to the philoſophers for a ſolution of ſuch queſtions. And from this hint Epicurus left philology and all other ſtudies, in order to betake himſelf to that ſcience, whence alone he expected ſatisfaction with regard to theſe ſublime ſubjects.

The common people were never likely to puſh their reſearches ſo far, or derive from reaſoning their ſyſtems of religion; when philologers and mythologiſts, we ſee, ſcarcely ever diſcovered ſo much penetration. And even the philoſophers who diſcourſed of ſuch topics, readily aſſented to the groſſeſt theory, and admitted,

* See NOTE [ZZ].
† Adverſus Mathem. lib. ix.

ted the joint origin of gods and men from night and chaos, from fire, water, air, or whatever they eſtabliſhed to be the ruling element.

Nor was it only on their firſt origin that the gods were ſuppoſed dependent on the powers of nature. Throughout the whole period of their exiſtence, they were ſubjected to the dominion of fate or deſtiny. "Think of the force of neceſſity," ſays Agrippa to the Roman people; "that force to which even the gods muſt ſubmit *." And the younger Pliny †, agreeably to this way of thinking, tells us, that amidſt the darkneſs, horror, and confuſion, which enſued upon the firſt eruption of Veſuvius, ſeveral concluded, that all nature was going to wreck, and that gods and men were periſhing in one common ruin.

It is great complaiſance, indeed, if we dignify with the name of religion ſuch an imperfect ſyſtem of theology, and put it on a level with later ſyſtems which are founded on principles more juſt and more ſublime. For my part, I can ſcarcely allow the principles even of Marcus Aurelius, Plutarch, and ſome other Stoics and Academics, though much more refined than the pagan ſuperſtition, to be worthy of the honourable appellation of theiſm. For if the mythology of the heathens reſemble the ancient European ſyſtem of ſpiritual beings, excluding God and angels, and leaving only fairies and ſprights; the creed of theſe philoſophers may juſtly be ſaid to exclude a deity, and to leave only angels and fairies.

* Dionyſ. Halic. lib. vi.

† Epiſt. lib. vi.

SECT. V. *Various Forms of Polytheiſm: Allegory, Hero Worſhip.*

BUT it is chiefly our preſent buſineſs to conſider the groſs polytheiſm of the vulgar, and to trace all its various appearances, in the principles of human nature, whence they are derived.

Whoever learns by argument the exiſtence of inviſible intelligent power, muſt reaſon from the admirable contrivance of natural objects, and muſt ſuppoſe the world to be the workmanſhip of that divine Being, the original cauſe of all things. But the vulgar polytheiſt ſo far from admitting that idea, deifies every part of the univerſe, and conceives all the conſpicuous productions of nature, to be themſelves ſo many real divinities. The ſun, moon, and ſtars, are all gods according to his ſyſtem: Fountains are inhabited by nymphs, and trees by hamadryads: Even monkies, dogs, cats, and other animals, often become ſacred in his eyes, and ſtrike him with a religious veneration. And thus, however ſtrong mens propenſity to believe inviſible, intelligent power in nature, their propenſity is equally ſtrong to reſt their attention on ſenſible, viſible objects; and in order to reconcile theſe oppoſite inclinations, they are led to unite the inviſible power with ſome viſible object.

The diſtribution alſo of diſtinct provinces to the ſeveral deities, is apt to cauſe ſome allegory, both phyſical and moral, to enter into the vulgar ſyſtems of polytheiſm. The god of war will naturally be repreſented as furious, cruel, and impetuous: The god of poetry as elegant, polite, and amiable: The god of merchandiſe, eſpecially in early times, as thieviſh and deceitful.

The

The allegories, ſuppoſed in Homer and other mythologiſts, I allow have often been ſo ſtrained, that men of ſenſe are apt entirely to reject them, and to conſider them as the production merely of the fancy and conceit of critics and commentators. But, that allegory really has place in the heathen mythology, is undeniable even on the leaſt reflection. Cupid, the ſon of Venus; the Muſes, the daughters of Memory; Prometheus, the wiſe brother, and Epimetheus the fooliſh; Hygieia, or the goddeſs of health, deſcended from Eſculapius or the god of phyſic: Who ſees not, in theſe, and in many other inſtances, the plain traces of allegory?. When a god is ſuppoſed to preſide over any paſſion, event, or ſyſtem of actions, it is almoſt unavoidable to give him a genealogy, attributes, and adventures, ſuitable to his ſuppoſed powers and influence; and to carry on that ſimilitude and compariſon, which is naturally ſo agreeable to the mind of man.

Allegories, indeed, entirely perfect, we ought not to expect as the productions of ignorance and ſuperſtition; there being no work of genius that requires a nicer hand, or has been more rarely executed with ſucceſs. That Fear and Terror are the ſons of Mars, is juſt; but why by Venus *? That Harmony is the daughter of Venus, is regular; but why by Mars †? That Sleep is the brother of Death, is ſuitable; but why deſcribe him as enamoured of one of the Graces ‡? And ſince the ancient mythologiſts fall into miſtakes ſo groſs and palpable, we have no reaſon ſurely to expect ſuch refined and long-ſpun allegories, as ſome have endeavoured to deduce from their fictions.

* Heſiod. Theog. l. 935.

† Id. ibid. et Plut. in vita Pelop. ‡ Iliad. xiv. 267.

Lucretius was plainly seduced by the strong appearance of allegory, which is observable in the pagan fictions. He first addresses himself to Venus, as to that generating power which animates, renews, and beautifies the universe: but is soon betrayed by the mythology into incoherences, while he prays to that allegorical personage to appease the furies of her lover Mars: An idea not drawn from allegory, but from the popular religion, and which Lucretius, as an Epicurean, could not consistently admit of.

The deities of the vulgar are so little superior to human creatures, that, where men are affected with strong sentiments of veneration or gratitude for any hero or public benefactor, nothing can be more natural than to convert him into a god, and fill the heavens, after this manner, with continual recruits from among mankind. Most of the divinities of the ancient world are supposed to have once been men, and to have been beholden for their *apotheosis* to the admiration and affection of the people. The real history of their adventures, corrupted by tradition, and elevated by the marvellous, became a plentiful source of fable; especially in passing through the hands of poets, allegorists, and priests, who successively improved upon the wonder and astonishment of the ignorant multitude.

Painters, too, and sculptors, came in for their share of profit in the sacred mysteries; and furnishing men with sensible representations of their divinities, whom they clothed in human figures, gave great increase to the public devotion, and determined its object. It was probably for want of these arts in rude and barbarous ages, that men deified plants, animals, and even brute, unorganized matter; and, rather than be without a sensible object of worship, affixed divinity to such ungainly forms,

forms. Could any ſtatuary of Syria, in early times, have formed a juſt figure of Apollo, the conic ſtone, Heliogabalus, had never become the object of ſuch profound adoration, and been received as the repreſentation of the ſolar deity *.

Stilpo was baniſhed by the council of Areopagus, for affirming that the Minerva in the citadel was no divinity, but the workmanſhip of Phidias the ſculptor †. What degree of reaſon muſt we expect in the religious belief of the vulgar in other nations, when Athenians and Areopagites could entertain ſuch groſs conceptions?

Theſe, then, are the general principles of polytheiſm, founded in human nature, and little or nothing dependent on caprice and accident. As the cauſes, which beſtow happineſs or miſery, are in general very little known, and very uncertain, our anxious concern endeavours to attain a determinate idea of them; and finds no better expedient than to repreſent them as intelligent voluntary agents, like ourſelves; only ſomewhat ſuperior in power and wiſdom. The limited influence of theſe agents, and their great proximity to human weakneſs, introduce the various diſtribution and diviſion of their authority; and thereby give riſe to allegory. The ſame principles naturally deify mortals, ſuperior in power, courage, or underſtanding, and produce hero-worſhip, together with fabulous hiſtory and mythological tradition, in all its wild and unaccountable forms. And as an inviſible ſpiritual intelligence

* Herodian, lib. v. Jupiter Ammon is repreſented by Curtius as a deity of the ſame kind, lib. iv. cap. 7. The Arabians and Perſinuntians adored alſo ſhapeleſs unformed ſtones as their deity. Arnob. lib. vi. So much did their folly exceed that of the Egyptians.

† Diod. Laert. lib. ii.

gence is an object too refined for vulgar apprehenſion, men naturally affix it to ſome ſenſible repreſentation; ſuch as either the more conſpicuous parts of nature, or the ſtatues, images, and pictures, which a more refined age forms of its divinities.

Almoſt all idolaters, of whatever age or country, concur in theſe general principles and conceptions; and even the particular characters and provinces, which they aſſign to their deities, are not extremely different *. The Greek and Roman travellers and conquerors, without much difficulty, found their own deities every where; and ſaid, This is Mercury, that Venus; this Mars, that Neptune; by whatever title the ſtrange gods might be denominated. The goddeſs Hertha of our Saxon anceſtors, ſeems to be no other, according to Tacitus †, than the *Mater Tellus* of the Romans; and his conjecture was evidently juſt.

SECT. VI. *Origin of Theiſm from Polytheiſm.*

THE doctrine of one ſupreme Deity, the Author of Nature, is very ancient, has ſpread itſelf over great and populous nations, and among them has been embraced by all ranks and conditions of men: But whoever thinks that it has owed its ſucceſs to the prevalent force of thoſe invincible reaſons, on which it is undoubtedly founded, would ſhew himſelf little acquainted with the ignorance and ſtupidity of the people, and their incurable prejudices in favour of their particular ſuperſtitions. Even at this day, and in Europe, aſk any of the

* See Cæſar of the religion of the Gauls, De bello Gallico, lib. xi.
† De Moribus Germ.

the vulgar, why he believes in an omnipotent Creator of the world? he will never mention the beauty of final cauſes, of which he is wholly ignorant: He will not hold out his hand, and bid you contemplate the ſuppleneſs and variety of joints in his fingers, their bending all one way, the counterpoiſe which they receive from the thumb, the ſoftneſs and fleſhy parts of the inſide of his hand, with all the other circumſtances which render that member fit for the uſe to which it was deſtined. To theſe he has been long accuſtomed; and he beholds them with liſtleſſneſs and unconcern. He will tell you of the ſudden and unexpected death of ſuch a one; the fall and bruiſe of ſuch another; the exceſſive drought of this ſeaſon; the cold and rains of another. Theſe he aſcribes to the immediate operation of Providence: and ſuch events as, with good reaſoners, are the chief difficulties in admitting a ſupreme intelligence, are with him the ſole arguments for it.

Many theiſts, even the moſt zealous and refined, have denied a particular providence, and have aſſerted, that the Sovereign mind, or firſt principle of all things, having fixed general laws by which nature is governed, gives free and uninterrupted courſe to theſe laws, and diſturbs not, at every turn, the ſettled order of events, by particular volitions. From the beautiful connection, ſay they, and rigid obſervance of eſtabliſhed rules, we draw the chief argument for theiſm; and from the ſame principles, are enabled to anſwer the principal objections againſt it. But ſo little is this underſtood by the generality of mankind, that, whereever they obſerve any one to aſcribe all events to natural cauſes, and to remove the particular interpoſition of a Deity, they are apt to ſuſpect him of the groſſeſt infidelity. "A little philoſophy," ſays Lord Bacon, "makes

" makes men atheiſts; a great deal reconciles them to religion." For men, being taught by ſuperſtitious prejudices to lay the ſtreſs on a wrong place, when that fails them, and they diſcover, by a little reflection, that the courſe of nature is regular and uniform, their whole faith totters, and falls to ruin. But being taught, by more reflection, that this very regularity and uniformity is the ſtrongeſt proof of deſign, and of a ſupreme intelligence, they return to that belief which they had deſerted; and they are now able to eſtabliſh it on a firmer and more durable foundation.

Convulſions in nature, diſorders, prodigies, miracles, though the moſt oppoſite to the plan of a wiſe ſuperintendent, impreſs mankind with the ſtrongeſt ſentiments of religion; the cauſes of events ſeeming then the moſt unknown and unaccountable. Madneſs, fury, rage, and an inflamed imagination, though they ſink men neareſt to the level of beaſts, are, for a like reaſon, often ſuppoſed to be the only diſpoſitions in which we can have any immediate communication with the Deity.

We may conclude, therefore, upon the whole, that ſince the vulgar, in nations which have embraced the doctrine of theiſm, ſtill build it upon irrational and ſuperſtitious principles, they are never led into that opinion by any proceſs of argument, but by a certain train of thinking, more ſuitable to their genius and capacity.

It may readily happen, in an idolatrous nation, that though men admit the exiſtence of ſeveral limited deities, yet is there ſome one God, whom, in a particular manner, they make the object of their worſhip and adoration. They may either ſuppoſe that, in the diſtribution of power and territory among the gods, their nation

nation was ſubjected to the juriſdiction of that particular deity; or, reducing heavenly objects to the model of things below, they may repreſent one God as the prince or ſupreme magiſtrate of the reſt, who, though of the ſame nature, rules them with an authority like that which an earthly ſovereign exerciſes over his ſubjects and vaſſals. Whether this god, therefore, be conſidered as their peculiar patron, or as the general ſovereign of heaven, his votaries will endeavour, by every art, to inſinuate themſelves into his favour; and ſuppoſing him to be pleaſed, like themſelves, with praiſe and flattery, there is no eulogy or exaggeration which will be ſpared in their addreſſes to him. In proportion as mens fears or diſtreſſes become more urgent, they ſtill invent new ſtrains of adulation; and even he who outdoes his predeceſſor in ſwelling up the titles of his divinity, is ſure to be outdone by his ſucceſſor in newer and more pompous epithets of praiſe. Thus they proceed, till at laſt they arrive at infinity itſelf; beyond which there is no farther progreſs: And it is well, if, in ſtriving to get farther, and to repreſent a magnificent ſimplicity, they run not into inexplicable myſtery, and deſtroy the intelligent nature of their deity, on which alone any rational worſhip or adoration can be founded. While they confine themſelves to the notion of a perfect being, the Creator of the world, they coincide, by chance, with the principles of reaſon and true philoſophy; though they are guided to that notion, not by reaſon, of which they are i a great meaſure incapable, but by the adulation and fears of the moſt vulgar ſuperſtition.

We often find, amongſt barbarous nations, and even ſometimes among civilized, that when every ſtrain of flattery has been exhauſted towards arbitrary princes, when

when every human quality has been applauded to the utmoſt; their ſervile courtiers repreſent them at laſt as real divinities, and point them out to the people as objects of adoration. How much more natural, therefore, is it, that a limited deity, who at firſt is ſuppoſed only the immediate author of the particular goods and ills in life, ſhould in the end be repreſented as ſovereign maker and modifier of the univerſe?

Even where this notion of a ſupreme deity is already eſtabliſhed; though it ought naturally to leſſen every other worſhip, and abaſe every object of reverence; yet if a nation has entertained the opinion of a ſubordinate tutelar divinity, ſaint, or angel, their addreſſes to that being gradually riſe upon them, and encroach on the adoration due to their ſupreme deity. The Virgin Mary, ere checked by the reformation, had proceeded, from being merely a good woman, to uſurp many attributes of the Almighty: God and St Nicholas go hand in hand, in all the prayers and petitions of the Muſcovites.

Thus the deity, who, from love, converted himſelf into a bull, in order to carry off Europa, and who, from ambition, dethroned his father Saturn, became the Optimus Maximus of the heathens: Thus the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, became the ſupreme Deity or Jehovah of the Jews.

The Jacobins, who denied the immaculate conception, have ever been very unhappy in their doctrine, even though political reaſons have kept the Romiſh church from condemning it. The Cordeliers have run away with all the popularity. But in the fifteenth century, as we learn from Boulainvilliers *, an Italian Cordelier maintained, that during the three days when Chriſt

* Hiſtoire abregée, p. 499.

Chriſt was interred, the hypoſtatic union was diſſolved, and that his human nature was not a proper object of adoration during that period. Without the art of divination, one might foretel, that ſo groſs and impious a blaſphemy would not fail to be anathematized by the people. It was the occaſion of great inſults on the part of the Jacobins; who now got ſome recompence for their misfortunes in the war about the immaculate conception.

Rather than relinquiſh this propenſity to adulation, religioniſts, in all ages, have involved themſelves in the greateſt abſurdities and contradictions.

Homer, in one paſſage, calls Oceanus and Tethys the original parents of all things, conformably to the eſtabliſhed mythology and tradition of the Greeks: yet in other paſſages, he could not forbear complimenting Jupiter, the reigning deity, with that magnificent appellation; and accordingly denominates him the father of gods and men. He forgets, that every temple, every ſtreet, was full of the anceſtors, uncles, brothers, and ſiſters of this Jupiter; who was in reality nothing but an upſtart parricide and uſurper. A like contradiction is obſervable in Heſiod; and is ſo much the leſs excuſable, as his profeſſed intention was to deliver a true genealogy of the gods.

Were there a religion (and we may ſuſpect Mahometaniſm of this inconſiſtence) which ſometimes painted the Deity in the moſt ſublime colours, as the Creator of heaven and earth; ſometimes degraded him nearly to a level with human creatures in his powers and faculties; while at the ſame time it aſcribed to him ſuitable infirmities, paſſions, and partialities of the moral kind: That religion, after it was extinct, would alſo be cited as an inſtance of thoſe contradictions,

which

which ariſe from the groſs, vulgar, natural conceptions of mankind, oppoſed to their continual propenſity towards flattery and exaggeration. Nothing indeed would prove more ſtrongly the divine origin of any religion, than to find (and happily this is the caſe with Chriſtianity) that it is free from a contradiction, ſo incident to human nature.

SECT. VII. *Confirmation of this Doctrine.*

IT appears certain, that though the original notions of the vulgar repreſent the Divinity as a limited being, and conſider him only as the particular cauſe of health or ſickneſs, plenty or want, proſperity or adverſity; yet when more magnificent ideas are urged upon them, they eſteem it dangerous to refuſe their aſſent. Will you ſay that your deity is finite, and bounded in his perfections; may be overcome by a greater force; is ſubject to human paſſions, pains, and infirmities; has a beginning, and may have an end? This they dare not affirm; but thinking it ſafeſt to comply with the higher encomiums, they endeavour, by an affected raviſhment and devotion, to ingratiate themſelves with him. As a confirmation of this, we may obſerve, that the aſſent of the vulgar is, in this caſe, merely verbal, and that they are incapable of conceiving thoſe ſublime qualities which they ſeemingly attribute to the Deity. Their real idea of him, notwithſtanding their pompous language, is ſtill as poor and frivolous as ever.

That original intelligence, ſay the Magians, who is the firſt principle of all things, diſcovers himſelf immediately to the mind and underſtanding alone; but has placed

placed the ſun as his image in the viſible univerſe; and when that bright luminary diffuſes its beams over the earth and the firmament, it is a faint copy of the glory which reſides in the higher heavens. If you would eſcape the diſpleaſure of this Divine Being, you muſt be careful never to ſet your bare foot upon the ground, nor ſpit into a fire, nor throw any water upon it, even though it were conſuming a whole city *. Who can expreſs the perfections of the Almighty? ſay the Mahometans. Even the nobleſt of his works, if compared to him, are but duſt and rubbiſh. How much more muſt human conception fall ſhort of his infinite perfections? His ſmile and favour render men for ever happy; and to obtain it for your children, the beſt method is to cut off from them, while infants, a little bit of ſkin, about half the breadth of a farthing. Take two bits of cloth †, ſay the Roman Catholics, about an inch or an inch and a half ſquare; join them by the corners with two ſtrings or pieces of tape about ſixteen inches long; throw this over your head, and make one of the bits of cloth lie upon your breaſt, and the other upon your back, keeping them next your ſkin: there is not a better ſecret for recommending yourſelf to that infinite Being, who exiſts from eternity to eternity.

The Getes, commonly called immortal, from their ſteady belief of the ſoul's immortality, were genuine theiſts and unitarians. They affirmed Zamolxis, their deity, to be the only true god; and aſſerted the worſhip of all other nations to be addreſſed to mere fictions and chimæras. But were their religious principles any more refined on account of theſe magnificent pre-

 tenſions?

* Hyde de Relig. veterum Perſarum.

† Called the Scapulaire.

tenſions? Every fifth year they ſacrificed a human victim, whom they ſent as a meſſenger to their deity, in order to inform him of their wants and neceſſities. And when it thundered, they were ſo provoked, that in order to return the defiance, they let fly arrows at him, and declined not the combat as unequal. Such at leaſt is the account which Herodotus gives of the theiſm of the immortal Getes *.

SECT. VIII. *Flux and Reflux of Polytheiſm and Theiſm.*

IT is remarkable, that the principles of religion have a kind of flux and reflux in the human mind, and that men have a natural tendency to riſe from idolatry to theiſm, and to ſink again from theiſm into idolatry. The vulgar, that is, indeed, all mankind, a few excepted, being ignorant and uninſtructed, never elevate their contemplation to the heavens, or penetrate by their diſquiſitions into the ſecret ſtructure of vegetable or animal bodies; ſo far as to diſcover a ſupreme mind or original providence, which beſtowed order on every part of nature. They conſider theſe admirable works in a more confined and ſelfiſh view; and finding their own happineſs and miſery to depend on the ſecret influence and unforeſeen concurrence of external objects, they regard, with perpetual attention, the unknown cauſes which govern all theſe natural events, and diſtribute pleaſure and pain, good and ill, by their powerful, but ſilent, operation. The unknown cauſes are ſtill appealed to on every emergence; and in this general appearance or confuſed image, are the perpetual objects of human hopes and fears, wiſhes and apprehenſions.

* Lib. iv.

ſions. By degrees, the active imagination of men, uneaſy in this abſtract conception of objects, about which it is inceſſantly employed, begins to render them more particular, and to clothe them in ſhapes more ſuitable to its natural comprehenſion. It repreſents them to be ſenſible, intelligent beings, like mankind; actuated by love and hatred, and flexible by gifts and entreaties, by prayers and ſacrifices. Hence the origin of religion; and hence the origin of idolatry or polytheiſm.

But the ſame anxious concern for happineſs, which begets the idea of theſe inviſible, intelligent powers, allows not mankind to remain long in the firſt ſimple conception of them; as powerful, but limited beings; maſters of human fate, but ſlaves to deſtiny and the courſe of nature. Mens exaggerated praiſes and compliments ſtill ſwell their idea upon them; and elevating their deities to the utmoſt bounds of perfection, at laſt beget the attributes of unity and infinity, ſimplicity and ſpirituality. Such refined ideas, being ſomewhat diſproportioned to vulgar comprehenſion, remain not long in their original purity; but require to be ſupported by the notion of inferior mediators, or ſubordinate agents, which interpoſe between mankind and their ſupreme deity. Theſe demigods or middle beings, partaking more of human nature, and being more familiar to us, become the chief objects of devotion, and gradually recal that idolatry, which had been formerly baniſhed by the ardent prayers and panegyrics of timorous and indigent mortals. But as theſe idolatrous religions fall every day into groſſer and more vulgar conceptions, they at laſt deſtroy themſelves, and, by the vile repreſentations which they form of their deities, make the tide turn again towards theiſm. But

ſo great is the propenſity, in this alternate revolution of human ſentiments, to return back to idolatry, that the utmoſt precaution is not able effectually to prevent it. And of this, ſome atheiſts, particularly the Jews and Mahometans, have been ſenſible; as appears by their baniſhing all the arts of ſtatuary and painting, and not allowing the repreſentations, even of human figures, to be taken by marble or colours; leſt the common infirmity of mankind ſhould thence produce idolatry. The feeble apprehenſions of men cannot be ſatisfied with conceiving their deity as a pure ſpirit and perfect intelligence; and yet their natural terrors keep them from imputing to him the leaſt ſhadow of limitation and imperfection. They fluctuate between theſe oppoſite ſentiments. The ſame infirmity ſtill drags them downwards, from an omnipotent and ſpiritual deity, to a limited and corporeal one, and from a corporeal and limited deity, to a ſtatue or viſible repreſentation. The ſame endeavour at elevation ſtill puſhes them upwards, from the ſtatue or material image, to the inviſible power; and from the inviſible power, to an infinitely perfect deity, the Creator and Sovereign of the univerſe.

SECT. IX. *Compariſon of theſe Religions, with regard to Perſecution and Toleration.*

POLYTHEISM, or idolatrous worſhip, being founded entirely in vulgar traditions, is liable to this great inconvenience, that any practice or opinion, however barbarous or corrupted, may be authoriſed by it; and full ſcope is given for knavery to impoſe on credulity, till morals and humanity be expelled the religious ſyſtems

ſtems of mankind. At the ſame time, idolatry is attended with this evident advantage, that, by limiting the powers and functions of its deities, it naturally admits the gods of other ſects and nations to a ſhare of divinity, and renders all the various deities, as well as rites, ceremonies, or traditions, compatible with each other *. Theiſm is oppoſite, both in its advantages and diſadvantages. As that ſyſtem ſuppoſes one ſole deity, the perfection of reaſon and goodneſs, it ſhould, if juſtly proſecuted, baniſh every thing frivolous, unreaſonable, or inhuman, from religious worſhip, and ſet before men the moſt illuſtrious example, as well as the moſt commanding motives, of juſtice and benevolence. Theſe mighty advantages are not indeed overbalanced (for that is not poſſible), but ſomewhat diminiſhed, by inconveniences, which ariſe from the vices and prejudices of mankind. While one ſole object of devotion is acknowledged, the worſhip of other deities is regarded as abſurd and impious. Nay, this unity of object ſeems naturally to require the unity of faith and ceremonies, and furniſhes deſigning men with a pretence for repreſenting their adverſaries as profane, and the objects of divine as well as human vengeance. For as each ſect is poſitive that its own faith and worſhip are entirely acceptable to the Deity, and as no one can conceive that the ſame being ſhould be pleaſed with different and oppoſite rites and principles; the ſeveral ſects fall naturally into animoſity, and mutually diſcharge on each other that ſacred zeal and rancour, the moſt furious and implacable of all human paſſions.

The tolerating ſpirit of idolaters, both in ancient and modern times, is very obvious to any one, who is the

* See Note [AAA].

leaſt converſant in the writings of hiſtorians or travellers. When the oracle of Delphi was aſked, what rites or worſhip was moſt acceptable to the gods? Thoſe which are legally eſtabliſhed in each city, replied the oracle *. Even prieſts, in thoſe ages, could, it ſeems, allow ſalvation to thoſe of a different communion. The Romans commonly adopted the gods of the conquered people; and never diſputed the attributes of thoſe local and national deities, in whoſe territories they reſided. The religious wars and perſecutions of the Egyptian idolaters are indeed an exception to this rule; but are accounted for by ancient authors from reaſons ſingular and remarkable. Different ſpecies of animals were the deities of the different ſects among the Egyptians; and the deities being in continual war, engaged their votaries in the ſame contention. The worſhippers of dogs could not long remain in peace with the adorers of cats or wolves †. But where that reaſon took not place, the Egyptian ſuperſtition was not ſo incompatible as is commonly imagined; ſince we learn from Herodotus ‡, that very large contributions were given by Amaſis towards rebuilding the temple of Delphi.

The intolerance of almoſt all religions, which have maintained the unity of God, is as remarkable as the contrary principle of polytheiſts. The implacable narrow ſpirit of the Jews is well known. Mahometaniſm ſet out with ſtill more bloody principles; and even to this day, deals out damnation, though not fire and faggot, to all other ſects. And if, among Chriſtians, the Engliſh and Dutch have embraced the principles of toleration, this ſingularity has proceeded from the ſteady

* Xenoph. Memor. lib. ii.

† Plutarch. de Iſid. & Oſiride.

‡ Lib. ii. ſub fine.

ſteady reſolution of the civil magiſtrate, in oppoſition to the continued efforts of prieſts and bigots.

The diſciples of Zoroaſter ſhut the doors of heaven againſt all but the Magians *. Nothing could more obſtruct the progreſs of the Perſian conqueſts, than the furious zeal of that nation againſt the temples and images of the Greeks. And after the overthrow of that empire, we find Alexander, as a polytheiſt, immediately re-eſtabliſhing the worſhip of the Babylonians, which their former princes, as monotheiſts, had carefully aboliſhed †. Even the blind and devoted attachment of that conqueror to the Greek ſuperſtition hindered not, but he himſelf ſacrificed according to the Babyloniſh rites and ceremonies ‡.

So ſociable is polytheiſm, that the utmoſt fierceneſs and antipathy, which it meets with in an oppoſite religion, is ſcarcely able to diſguſt it, and keep it at a diſtance. Auguſtus praiſed extremely the reſerve of his grandſon, Caius Cæſar, when this latter prince, paſſing by Jeruſalem, deigned not to ſacrifice according to the Jewiſh law. But for what reaſon did Auguſtus ſo much approve of this conduct? Only becauſe that religion was by the Pagans eſteemed ignoble and barbarous §.

I may venture to affirm, that few corruptions of idolatry and polytheiſm are more pernicious to ſociety than this corruption of theiſm ‖, when carried to the utmoſt height. The human ſacrifices of the Carthaginians, Mexicans, and many barbarous nations ¶, ſcarcely

* Hyde de Relig. vet. Perſarum.
† Arian. de exped. lib. iii. Id. lib. vii. ‡ Id. ibid.
§ Sueton. in vita Aug. c. 93. ‖ *Corruptio optimi peſſima.*
¶ See Note [BBB].

ſcarcely exceed the inquiſition and perſecutions of Rome and Madrid. For, beſides that the effuſion of blood may not be ſo great in the former caſe as in the latter; beſides this, I ſay, the human victims, being choſen by lot, or by ſome exterior ſigns, affect not, in ſo conſiderable a degree, the reſt of the ſociety. Whereas virtue, knowledge, love of liberty, are the qualities which call down the fatal vengeance of inquiſitors; and, when expelled, leave the ſociety in the moſt ſhameful ignorance, corruption, and bondage. The illegal murder of one man by a tyrant, is more pernicious than the death of a thouſand by peſtilence, famine, or any undiſtinguiſhing calamity.

In the temple of Diana at Aricia near Rome, whoever murdered the preſent prieſt, was legally entitled to be inſtalled his ſucceſſor *. A very ſingular inſtitution! For, however barbarous and bloody the common ſuperſtitions often are to the laity, they uſually turn to the advantage of the holy order.

SECT. X. *With regard to Courage or Abaſement.*

FROM the compariſon of theiſm and idolatry, we may form ſome other obſervations, which will alſo confirm the vulgar obſervation, that the corruption of the beſt things gives riſe to the worſt.

Where the deity is repreſented as infinitely ſuperior to mankind, this belief, though altogether juſt, is apt, when joined with ſuperſtitious terrors, to ſink the human mind into the loweſt ſubmiſſion and abaſement, and to repreſent the monkiſh virtues of mortification, penance, humility, and paſſive ſuffering, as the only qualities

* Strabo, lib. v. Sueton. in vita Cal.

qualities which are acceptable to him. But where the gods are conceived to be only a little ſuperior to mankind, and to have been, many of them, advanced from that inferior rank, we are more at our eaſe in our addreſſes to them, and may even, without profaneneſs, aſpire ſometimes to a rivalſhip and emulation of them. Hence activity, ſpirit, courage, magnanimity, love of liberty, and all the virtues which aggrandize a people.

The heroes in paganiſm correſpond exactly to the ſaints in popery, and holy derviſes in Mahometaniſm. The place of Hercules, Theſeus, Hector, Romulus, is now ſupplied by Dominic, Francis, Anthony, and Benedict. Inſtead of the deſtruction of monſters, the ſubduing of tyrants, the defence of our native country; whippings and faſtings, cowardice and humility, abject ſubmiſſion, and ſlaviſh obedience, are become the means of obtaining celeſtial honours among mankind.

One great incitement to the pious Alexander in his warlike expeditions, was his rivalſhip of Hercules and Bacchus, whom he juſtly pretended to have excelled*. Braſidas, that generous and noble Spartan, after falling in battle, had heroic honours paid him by the inhabitants of Amphipolis, whoſe defence he had embraced †. And, in general, all founders of ſtates and colonies among the Greeks were raiſed to this inferior rank of divinity, by thoſe who reaped the benefit of their labours.

This gave riſe to the obſervation of Machiavel ‡, that the doctrines of the Chriſtian religion, meaning the Catholic (for he knew no other), which recommend only paſſive courage and ſuffering, had ſubdued the ſpirit of mankind, and had fitted them for ſlavery and

* Arian paſſim. † Thucyd. lib. v. ‡ Diſcorſi, lib. vi.

and ſubjection. An obſervation which would certainly be juſt, were there not many other circumſtances in human ſociety which controul the genius and character of a religion.

Braſidas ſeized a mouſe, and being bit by it, let it go. "There is nothing ſo contemptible," ſaid he, "but what may be ſafe, if it has but courage to defend itſelf *." Bellarmine patiently and humbly allowed the fleas and other odious vermin to prey upon him. "We ſhall have heaven," ſaid he, "to reward us for our ſufferings: But theſe poor creatures have nothing but the enjoyment of the preſent life †." Such difference is there between the maxims of a Greek hero and a Catholic ſaint.

SECT. XI. *With regard to Reaſon or Abſurdity.*

HERE is another obſervation to the ſame purpoſe, and new proof that the corruption of the beſt things begets the worſt. If we examine, without prejudice, the ancient heathen mythology, as contained in the poets, we ſhall not diſcover in it any ſuch monſtrous abſurdity as we may at firſt be apt to apprehend. Where is the difficulty in conceiving, that the ſame powers or principles, whatever they were, which formed this viſible world, men and animals, produced alſo a ſpecies of intelligent creatures, of more refined ſubſtance and greater authority than the reſt? That theſe creatures may be capricious, revengeful, paſſionate, voluptuous, is eaſily conceived; nor is any circumſtance more apt, among ourſelves, to engender ſuch vices, than the licence of abſolute authority. And,

* Plut. Apophth. † Bayle, Article BELLARMINE.

And, in ſhort, the whole mythological ſyſtem is ſo natural, that, in the vaſt variety of planets and worlds, contained in this univerſe, it ſeems more than probable, that, ſomewhere or other, it is really carried into execution.

The chief objection to it with regard to this planet, is, that it is not aſcertained by any juſt reaſon or authority. The ancient tradition, inſiſted on by heathen prieſts and theologers, is but a weak foundation; and tranſmitted alſo ſuch a number of contradictory reports, ſupported, all of them, by equal authority, that it became abſolutely impoſſible to fix a preference amongſt them. A few volumes, therefore, muſt contain all the polemical writings of pagan prieſts: And their whole theology muſt conſiſt more of traditional ſtories and ſuperſtitious practices, than of philoſophical argument and controverſy.

But where theiſm forms the fundamental principle of any popular religion, that tenet is ſo conformable to ſound reaſon, that philoſophy is apt to incorporate itſelf with ſuch a ſyſtem of theology. And if the other dogmas of that ſyſtem be contained in a ſacred book, ſuch as the Alcoran, or be determined by any viſible authority, like that of the Roman pontiff, ſpeculative reaſoners naturally carry on their aſſent, and embrace a theory, which has been inſtilled into them by their earlieſt education, and which alſo poſſeſſes ſome degree of conſiſtence and uniformity. But as theſe appearances are ſure, all of them, to prove deceitful, philoſophy will ſoon find herſelf very unequally yoked with her new aſſociate; and inſtead of regulating each principle as they advance together, ſhe is at every turn perverted to ſerve the purpoſes of ſuperſtition. For beſides the unavoidable incoherences, which muſt be

be reconciled and adjuſted, one may ſafely affirm, that all popular theology, eſpecially the ſcholaſtic, has a kind of appetite for abſurdity and contradiction. If that theology went not beyond reaſon and common ſenſe, her doctrines would appear too eaſy and familiar. Amazement muſt of neceſſity be raiſed: Myſtery affected: Darkneſs and obſcurity ſought after: And a foundation of merit afforded to the devout votaries, who deſire an opportunity of ſubduing their rebellious reaſon, by the belief of the moſt unintelligible ſophiſms.

Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory ſufficiently confirms theſe reflections. When a controverſy is ſtarted, ſome people always pretend with certainty to foretel the iſſue. Whichever opinion, ſay they, is moſt contrary to plain ſenſe, is ſure to prevail; even where the general intereſt of the ſyſtem requires not that deciſion. Though the reproach of hereſy may, for ſome time, be bandied about among the diſputants, it always reſts at laſt on the ſide of reaſon. Any one, it is pretended, that has but learning enough of this kind to know the definition of Arian, Pelagian, Eraſtian, Socinian, Sabellian, Eutychian, Neſtorian, Monothelite, &c. not to mention Proteſtant, whoſe fate is yet uncertain, will be convinced of the truth of this obſervation. It is thus a ſyſtem becomes more abſurd in the end, merely from its being reaſonable and philoſophical in the beginning.

To oppoſe the torrent of ſcholaſtic religion, by ſuch feeble maxims as theſe, that "it is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be and not to be," that "the whole is greater than a part," that "two and three make five;" is pretending to ſtop the ocean with a bull-ruſh. Will you ſet up profane reaſon againſt ſacred myſtery? No puniſhment is great enough for your impiety. And the

the ſame fires which were kindled for heretics, will ſerve alſo for the deſtruction of philoſophers.

SECT. XII. *With regard to Doubt or Conviction.*

WE meet every day with people ſo ſceptical with regard to hiſtory, that they aſſert it impoſſible for any nation ever to believe ſuch abſurd principles as thoſe of Greek and Egyptian paganiſm; and at the ſame time ſo dogmatical with regard to religion, that they think the ſame abſurdities are to be found in no other communion. Cambyſes entertained like prejudices; and very impiouſly ridiculed, and even wounded, Apis, the great god of the Egyptians, who appeared to his profane ſenſes nothing but a large ſpotted bull. But Herodotus * judiciouſly aſcribes this ſally of paſſion to a real madneſs or diſorder of the brain: Otherwiſe, ſays the hiſtorian, he never would have openly affronted any eſtabliſhed worſhip. For on that head, continues he, every nation are beſt ſatisfied with their own, and think they have the advantage over every other nation.

It muſt be allowed, that the Roman Catholics are a very learned ſect; and that no one communion, but that of the church of England, can diſpute their being the moſt learned of all the Chriſtian churches: Yet Averroes, the famous Arabian, who, no doubt, had heard of the Egyptian ſuperſtitions, declares, that, of all religions, the moſt abſurd and nonſenſical is that, whoſe votaries eat, after having created their deity.

I believe, indeed, that there is no tenet in all paganiſm, which would give ſo fair a ſcope to ridicule as this of the real preſence: For it is ſo abſurd, that it eludes the force of all argument. There are even ſome pleaſant

* Lib. iii. c. 38.

ſant ſtories of that kind, which, though ſomewhat profane, are commonly told by the Catholics themſelves. One day a prieſt, it is ſaid, gave inadvertently, inſtead of the ſacrament, a counter, which had by accident fallen among the holy wafers. The communicant waited patiently for ſome time, expecting it would diſſolve on his tongue: But finding that it ſtill remained entire, he took it off. "I wiſh," cried he to the prieſt, "you have not committed ſome miſtake: I wiſh you have not given me God the Father: He is ſo hard and tough there is no ſwallowing him."

A famous general, at that time in the Muſcovite ſervice, having come to Paris for the recovery of his wounds, brought along with him a young Turk, whom he had taken priſoner. Some of the doctors of the Sorbonne (who are altogether as poſitive as the derviſes of Conſtantinople) thinking it a pity that the poor Turk ſhould be damned for want of inſtruction, ſolicited Muſtapha very hard to turn Chriſtian, and promiſed him, for his encouragement, plenty of good wine in this world, and paradiſe in the next. Theſe allurements were too powerful to be reſiſted; and therefore, having been well inſtructed and catechized, he at laſt agreed to receive the ſacraments of baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper. The prieſt, however, to make every thing ſure and ſolid, ſtill continued his inſtructions; and began the next day with the uſual queſtion, "How many Gods are there?" "None at all," replies Benedict; for that was his new name. "How! None at all!" cries the prieſt. "To be ſure," ſaid the honeſt proſelyte: "You have told me all along that there is but one God: And yeſterday I eat him."

Such are the doctrines of our brethren the Catholics. But to theſe doctrines we are ſo accuſtomed, that

we

we never wonder at them: Though in a future age, it will probably become difficult to perſuade ſome nations, that any human, two-legged creature could ever embrace ſuch principles. And it is a thouſand to one, but theſe nations themſelves ſhall have ſomething full as abſurd in their own creed, to which they will give a moſt implicit and moſt religious aſſent.

I lodged once at Paris, in the ſame hotel with an ambaſſador from Tunis, who, having paſſed ſome years at London, was returning home that way. One day I obſerved his Mooriſh excellency diverting himſelf under the porch, with ſurveying the ſplendid equipages that drove along; when there chanced to paſs that way ſome Capucin friars, who had never ſeen a Turk; as he, on his part, though accuſtomed to the European dreſſes, had never ſeen the groteſque figure of a Capucin: And there is no expreſſing the mutual admiration with which they inſpired each other. Had the chaplain of the embaſſy entered into a diſpute with theſe Franciſcans, their reciprocal ſurprize had been of the ſame nature. Thus, all mankind ſtand ſtaring at one another; and there is no beating it into their heads, that the turban of the African is not juſt as good or as bad a faſhion as the cowl of the European. "He is a very honeſt man," ſaid the prince of Salee, ſpeaking of de Ruyter: "It is a pity he were a Chriſtian."

How can you worſhip leeks and onions? we ſhall ſuppoſe a Sorbonniſt to ſay to a prieſt of Sais. If we worſhip them, replies the latter; at leaſt, we do not, at the ſame time, eat them. But what ſtrange objects of adoration are cats and monkies? ſays the learned doctor. They are at leaſt as good as the relics or rotten bones of martyrs, anſwers his no leſs learned antagoniſt. Are you not mad, inſiſts the Catholic, to cut one

one another's throat about the preference of a cabbage or a cucumber? Yes, ſays the pagan; I allow it, if you will confeſs, that thoſe are ſtill madder, who fight about the preference among volumes of ſophiſtry, ten thouſand of which are not equal in value to one cabbage or cucumber *.

Every by-ſtander will eaſily judge (but unfortunately the by-ſtanders are few), that, if nothing were requiſite to eſtabliſh any popular ſyſtem, but expoſing the abſurdities of other ſyſtems, every votary of every ſuperſtition could give a ſufficient reaſon for his blind and bigoted attachment to the principles in which he has been educated. But without ſo extenſive a knowledge, on which to ground this aſſurance (and perhaps better without it), there is not wanting a ſufficient ſtock of religious zeal and faith among mankind. Diodorus Siculus † gives a remarkable inſtance to this purpoſe, of which he was himſelf an eye-witneſs. While Egypt lay under the greateſt terror of the Roman name, a legionary ſoldier having inadvertently been guilty of the ſacrilegious impiety of killing a cat, the whole people roſe upon him with the utmoſt fury; and all the efforts of the prince were not able to ſave him. The ſenate and people of Rome, I am perſuaded, would not, then, have been ſo delicate with regard to their national deities. They very frankly, a little after that time, voted Auguſtus a place in the celeſtial manſions; and would have dethroned every god in heaven for his ſake, had he ſeemed to deſire it. *Preſens divus habebitur Auguſtus*, ſays Horace. That is a very important point: And in other nations, and other ages,

* See Note [CCC].

† Lib. i.

ages, the ſame circumſtance has not been deemed altogether indifferent *.

Notwithſtanding the ſanctity of our holy religion, ſays Tully †, no crime is more common with us than ſacrilege: But was it ever heard of, that an Egyptian violated the temple of a cat, an ibis, or a crocodile? There is no torture an Egyptian would not undergo, ſays the ſame author in another place ‡, rather than injure an ibis, an aſpic, a cat, a dog, or a crocodile. Thus it is ſtrictly true what Dryden obſerves,

" Of whatſoe'er deſcent their godhead be,
" Stock, ſtone, or other homely pedigree,
" In his defence his ſervants are as bold,
" As if he had been born of beaten gold."

ABSALOM and ACHITOPHEL.

Nay, the baſer the materials are of which the divinity is compoſed, the greater devotion is he likely to excite in the breaſts of his deluded votaries. They exult in their ſhame, and make a merit with their deity in braving, for his ſake, all the ridicule and contumely of his enemies. Ten thouſand cruſaders inliſt themſelves under the holy banners; and even openly triumph in thoſe parts of their religion which their adverſaries regard as the moſt reproachful.

There occurs, I own, a difficulty in the Egyptian ſyſtem of theology; as indeed, few ſyſtems of that kind are entirely free from difficulties. It is evident, from

* When Louis the XIVth took on himſelf the protection of the Jeſuits' College of Clermont, the ſociety ordered the king's arms to be put up over the gate, and took down the croſs, in order to make way for it: Which gave occaſion to the following epigram:

Suſtulit hinc Chriſti, poſuitque inſignia Regis:
Impia gens, alium neſcit habere Deum.

† De nat. Deor. l. i. ‡ Tuſc. Quæſt. lib. v.

their method of propagation, that a couple of cats, in fifty years, would ſtock a whole kingdom; and if that religious veneration were ſtill paid them, it would, in twenty more, not only be eaſier in Egypt to find a god than a man, which Petronius ſays was the caſe in ſome parts of Italy; but the gods muſt at laſt entirely ſtarve the men, and leave themſelves neither prieſts nor votaries remaining. It is probable, therefore, that this wiſe nation, the moſt celebrated in antiquity for prudence and ſound policy, foreſeeing ſuch dangerous conſequences, reſerved all their worſhip for the full-grown divinities, and uſed the freedom to drown the holy ſpawn, or little ſucking gods, without any ſcruple or remorſe. And thus the practice of warping the tenets of religion, in order to ſerve temporal intereſts, is not, by any means, to be regarded as an invention of theſe later ages.

The learned, philoſophical Varro, diſcourſing of religion, pretends not to deliver any thing beyond probabilities and appearances: Such was his good ſenſe and moderation! But the paſſionate, the zealous Auguſtin, inſults the noble Roman on his ſcepticiſm and reſerve, and profeſſes the moſt thorough belief and aſſurance *. A heathen poet, however, contemporary with the ſaint, abſurdly eſteems the religious ſyſtem of the latter ſo falſe, that even the credulity of children, he ſays, could not engage them to believe it †.

Is it ſtrange, when miſtakes are ſo common, to find every-one poſitive and dogmatical? And that the zeal often riſes in proportion to the error? *Moverunt*, ſays Spartian, *& ea tempeſtate, Judæi bellum quod vetabantur mutilare genitalia* ‡.

If

* De civitate Dei, l. lii. c. 17.

† Claudii Rutilii Numitiani iter, lib. i. l. 386.

‡ In vita Adriani.

If ever there was a nation or a time in which the public religion loſt all authority over mankind, we might expect that infidelity in Rome, during the Ciceronian age, would openly have erected its throne, and that Cicero himſelf, in every ſpeech and action, would have been its moſt declared abettor. But it appears, that, whatever ſceptical liberties that great man might take, in his writings or in philoſophical converſation; he yet avoided, in the common conduct of life, the imputation of deiſm and profaneneſs. Even in his own family, and to his wife Terentia, whom he highly truſted, he was willing to appear a devout religioniſt; and there remains a letter, addreſſed to her, in which he ſeriouſly deſires her to offer ſacrifice to Apollo and Æſculapius, in gratitude for the recovery of his health *.

Pompey's devotion was much more ſincere: In all his conduct, during the civil wars, he paid a great regard to auguries, dreams, and prophecies †. Auguſtus was tainted with ſuperſtition of every kind. As it is reported of Milton, that his poetical genius never flowed with eaſe and abundance in the ſpring; ſo Auguſtus obſerved, that his own genius for dreaming never was ſo perfect during that ſeaſon, nor was ſo much to be relied on, as during the reſt of the year. That great and able emperor was alſo extremely uneaſy, when he happened to change his ſhoes, and put the right foot ſhoe on the left foot ‡. In ſhort, it cannot be doubted, but the votaries of the eſtabliſhed ſuperſtition of antiquity, were as numerous in every ſtate, as thoſe of the modern religion are at preſent. Its influence was as

* Lib. xiv. epiſt. 7. † Cicero de Divin. lib. ii. c. 24.
‡ Sueton. Aug. cap. 90, 91, 92. Plin. lib. ii. cap. 7.

univerſal, though it was not ſo great. As many people gave their aſſent to it; though that aſſent was not ſeemingly ſo ſtrong, preciſe and affirmative.

We may obſerve that, notwithſtanding the dogmatical, imperious ſtyle of all ſuperſtition, the conviction of the religioniſts, in all ages, is more affected than real, and ſcarcely ever approaches, in any degree, to that ſolid belief and perſuaſion, which governs us in the common affairs of life. Men dare not avow, even to their own hearts, the doubts which they entertain on ſuch ſubjects: They make a merit of implicit faith; and diſguiſe to themſelves their real infidelity, by the ſtrongeſt aſſeverations and moſt poſitive bigotry. But nature is too hard for all their endeavours, and ſuffers not the obſcure, glimmering light, afforded in thoſe ſhadowy regions, to equal the ſtrong impreſſions made by common ſenſe and by experience. The uſual courſe of mens conduct belies their words, and ſhews, that their aſſent in theſe matters is ſome unaccountable operation of the mind between diſbelief and conviction, but approaching much nearer to the former than to the latter.

Since, therefore, the mind of man appears of ſo looſe and unſteady a texture, that, even at preſent, when ſo many perſons find an intereſt in continually employing on it the chiſſel and the hammer, yet are they not able to engrave theological tenets with any laſting impreſſion: how much more muſt this have been the caſe in ancient times, when the retainers to the holy function were ſo much fewer in compariſon? No wonder that the appearances were then very inconſiſtent, and that men, on ſome occaſions, might ſeem determined infidels, and enemies to the eſtabliſhed religion, without being

being ſo in reality; or, at leaſt, without knowing their own mind in that particular.

Another cauſe which rendered the ancient religions more looſe than the modern, is, that the former were traditional, and the latter are ſcriptural; and the tradition in the former was complex, contradictory, and, on many occaſions, doubtful; ſo that it could not poſſibly be reduced to any ſtandard and canon, or afford any determinate articles of faith. The ſtories of the gods were numberleſs, like the popiſh legends; and though every one, almoſt, believed a part of theſe ſtories, yet no one could believe or know the whole; while, at the ſame time, all muſt have acknowledged, that no one part ſtood on a better foundation than the reſt. The traditions of different cities and nations were alſo, on many occaſions, directly oppoſite; and no reaſon could be aſſigned for preferring one to the other. And as there was an infinite number of ſtories, with regard to which tradition was nowiſe poſitive, the gradation was inſenſible, from the moſt fundamental articles of faith to thoſe looſe and precarious fictions. The pagan religion, therefore, ſeemed to vaniſh like a cloud, whenever one approached to it, and examined it piecemeal. It could never be aſcertained by any fixed dogmas and principles. And though this did not convert the generality of mankind from ſo abſurd a faith; for when will the people be reaſonable? yet it made them falter and heſitate more in maintaining their principles, and was even apt to produce, in certain diſpoſitions of mind, ſome practices and opinions, which had the appearance of determined infidelity.

To which we may add, that the fables of the pagan religion were, of themſelves, light, eaſy, and familiar; without devils, or ſeas of brimſtone, or any object that

could much terrify the imagination. Who could forbear ſmiling, when he thought of the loves of Mars and Venus, or the amorous frolics of Jupiter and Pan? In this reſpect, it was a true poetical religion, if it had not rather too much levity for the graver kinds of poetry. We find that it has been adopted by modern bards; nor have theſe talked with greater freedom and irreverence of the gods, whom they regarded as fictions, than the ancients did of the real objects of their devotion.

The inference is by no means juſt, that, becauſe a ſyſtem of religion has made no deep impreſſion on the minds of a people, it muſt therefore have been poſitively rejected by all men of common ſenſe; and that oppoſite principles, in ſpite of the prejudices of education, were generally eſtabliſhed by argument and reaſoning. I know not but a contrary inference may be more probable. The leſs importunate and aſſuming any ſpecies of ſuperſtition appears, the leſs will it provoke mens ſpleen and indignation, or engage them into inquiries concerning its foundation and origin. This in the mean time is obvious, that the empire of all religious faith over the underſtanding is wavering and uncertain, ſubject to every variety of humour, and dependent on the preſent incidents which ſtrike the imagination. The difference is only in the degrees. An ancient will place a ſtroke of impiety and one of ſuperſtition alternately, throughout a whole diſcourſe*:

A

* Witneſs this remarkable paſſage of Tacitus: "Præter multiplices rerum humanarum caſus, cœlo terraque prodigia, et fulminum monitus, et futurorum præſagia, læta, triſtia, ambigua, manifeſta. Nec enim unquam atrocioribus populi Romani cladibus, magiſque juſtis judiciis approbatum eſt, non eſſe curæ Diis ſecuritatem noſtram,

A modern often thinks in the ſame way, though he may be more guarded in his expreſſion.

Lucian tells us expreſsly †, that whoever believed not the moſt ridiculous fables of paganiſm, was deemed by the people profane and impious. To what purpoſe, indeed, would that agreeable author have employed the whole force of his wit and ſatire againſt the national religion, had not that religion been generally believed by his countrymen and contemporaries?

Livy ‡ acknowledges, as frankly as any divine would at preſent, the common incredulity of his age; but then he condemns it as ſeverely. And who can imagine, that a national ſuperſtition, which could delude ſo ingenious a man, would not alſo impoſe on the generality of the people?

The Stoics beſtowed many magnificent, and even impious, epithets on their ſage; that he alone was rich, free, a king, and equal to the immortal gods. They forgot to add, that he was not ſuperior in prudence and underſtanding to an old woman. For ſurely nothing can be more pitiful than the ſentiments which that ſect entertained with regard to religious matters; while they ſeriouſly agree with the common augurs, that, when a raven croaks from the left, it is a good omen; but a bad one when a rook makes a noiſe from the ſame quarter. Panætius was the only Stoic among

" tram, eſſe ultionem." Hiſt. lib. i. Auguſtus's quarrel with Neptune is an inſtance of the ſame kind. Had not the emperor believed Neptune to be a real being, and to have dominion over the ſea, where had been the foundation of his anger? And if he believed it, what madneſs to provoke ſtill farther that deity? The ſame obſervation may be made upon Quintilian's exclamation on account of the death of his children, lib. vi. Præf.

† Philopſeudes. ‡ Lib. x. cap. 40.

the Greeks, who ſo much as doubted with regard to auguries and divinations *. Marcus Antoninus † tells us, that he himſelf had received many admonitions from the gods in his ſleep. It is true, Epictetus ‡ forbids us to regard the language of rooks and ravens; but it is not that they do not ſpeak truth; it is only becauſe they can foretell nothing but the breaking of our neck, or the forfeiture of our eſtate; which are circumſtances, ſays he, that nowiſe concern us. Thus the Stoics join a philoſophical enthuſiaſm to a religious ſuperſtition. The force of their mind, being all turned to the ſide of morals, unbent itſelf in that of religion ‖.

Plato § introduces Socrates affirming, that the accuſation of impiety raiſed againſt him was owing entirely to his rejecting ſuch fables as thoſe of Saturn's caſtrating his father Uranus, and Jupiter's dethroning Saturn: yet in a ſubſequent dialogue ¶, Socrates confeſſes, that the doctrine of the mortality of the ſoul was the received opinion of the people. Is there here any contradiction? Yes, ſurely: but the contradiction is not in Plato; it is in the people, whoſe religious principles in general are always compoſed of the moſt diſcordant parts; eſpecially in an age when ſuperſtition ſat ſo eaſy and light upon them **.

The ſame Cicero, who affected, in his own family, to appear a devout religioniſt, makes no ſcruple, in a public

* Cicero de Divin. lib. i. cap. 3. et 7.

† Lib. i. § 17. ‡ Ench. § 17.

‖ The Stoics, I own, were not quite orthodox in the eſtabliſhed religion; but one may ſee, from theſe inſtances, that they went a great way: and the people undoubtedly went every length.

§ Eutyphro. ¶ Phædo.

** See Note [DDD].

public court of judicature, of treating the doctrine of a future ſtate as a ridiculous fable, to which no body could give any attention *. Salluſt † repreſents Cæſar as ſpeaking the ſame language in the open ſenate ‡.

But, that all theſe freedoms implied not a total and univerſal infidelity and ſcepticiſm amongſt the people, is too apparent to be denied. Though ſome parts of the national religion hung looſe upon the minds of men, other parts adhered more cloſely to them: and it was the chief buſineſs of the ſceptical philoſophers to ſhow, that there was no more foundation for one than for the other. This is the artifice of Cotta in the dialogues concerning the nature of the gods. He refutes the whole ſyſtem of mythology, by leading the orthodox, gradually, from the more momentous ſtories which were believed, to the more frivolous which every one ridiculed: from the gods to the goddeſſes; from the goddeſſes to the nymphs; from the nymphs to the fawns and ſatyrs. His maſter, Carneades, had employed the ſame method of reaſoning ‖.

Upon the whole, the greateſt and moſt obſervable differences between a traditional, mythological religion,

* Pro Cluentio, cap. 61. † De bello Catilin.

‡ Cicero (Tuſc. Quæſt.) lib. i. cap. 5, 6. and Seneca (Ep. 24.) as alſo Juvenal (Satyr. 2.) maintain, that there is no boy or old woman ſo ridiculous as to believe the poets in their accounts of a future ſtate. Why then does Lucretius ſo highly exalt his maſter for freeing us from theſe terrors? Perhaps the generality of mankind were then in the diſpoſition of Cephalus in Plato (de Rep. lib. i.), who, while he was young and heathful, could ridicule theſe ſtories; but as ſoon as he became old and infirm, began to entertain apprehenſions of their truth. This we may obſerve not to be unuſual even at preſent.

‖ Sext. Empir. adverſ. Mathem. lib. viii.

gion, and a ſyſtematical, ſcholaſtic one, are two: The former is often more reaſonable, as conſiſting only of a multitude of ſtories; which, however groundleſs, imply no expreſs abſurdity and demonſtrative contradiction; and ſits alſo ſo eaſy and light on mens mind, that though it may be as univerſally received, it happily makes no ſuch deep impreſſion on the affections and underſtanding.

SECT. XIII. *Impious conceptions of the Divine nature in popular Religions of both kinds.*

THE primary religion of mankind ariſes chiefly from an anxious fear of future events: and, what ideas will naturally be entertained of inviſible, unknown powers, while men lie under diſmal apprehenſions of any kind, may eaſily be conceived. Every image of vengeance, ſeverity, cruelty, and malice, muſt occur, and muſt augment the ghaſtlineſs and horror which oppreſſes the amazed religioniſt. A panic having once ſeized the mind, the active fancy ſtill farther multiplies the objects of terror; while that profound darkneſs, or, what is worſe, that glimmering light with which we are environed, repreſents the ſpectres of divinity under the moſt dreadful appearances imaginable. And no idea of perverſe wickedneſs can be framed, which thoſe terrified devotees do not readily, without ſcruple, apply to their deity.

This appears the natural ſtate of religion, when ſurveyed in one light. But if we conſider, on the other hand, that ſpirit of praiſe and eulogy which neceſſarily has place in all religions, and which is the conſequence of theſe very terrors, we muſt expect a quite contrary

ſyſtem

ſyſtem of theology to prevail. Every virtue, every excellence, muſt be aſcribed to the divinity, and no exaggeration will be deemed ſufficient to reach thoſe perfections with which he is endowed. Whatever ſtrains of panegyric can be invented, are immediately embraced, without conſulting any arguments or phænomena: It is eſteemed a ſufficient confirmation of them, that they give us more magnificent ideas of the divine objects of our worſhip and adoration.

Here therefore is a kind of contradiction between the different principles of human nature which enter into religion. Our natural terrors preſent the notion of a deviliſh and malicious deity: our propenſity to adulation leads us to acknowledge an excellent and divine. And the influence of theſe oppoſite principles are various, according to the different ſituation of the human underſtanding.

In very barbarous and ignorant nations, ſuch as the Africans and Indians, nay even the Japoneſe, who can form no extenſive ideas of power and knowledge, worſhip may be paid to a being, whom they confeſs to be wicked and deteſtable; though they may be cautious, perhaps, of pronouncing this judgment of him in public, or in his temple, where he may be ſuppoſed to hear their reproaches.

Such rude, imperfect ideas of the divinity, adhere long to all idolaters; and it may ſafely be affirmed, that the Greeks themſelves never got entirely rid of them. It is remarked by Xenophon *, in praiſe of Socrates, that this philoſopher aſſented not to the vulgar opinion, which ſuppoſed the gods to know ſome things, and be ignorant of others: He maintained, that they knew every thing; what was done, ſaid, or even

* Mem. lib. i.

even thought. But as this was a ſtrain of philoſophy * much above the conception of his countrymen, we need not be ſurprized, if very frankly, in their books and converſation, they blamed the deities whom they worſhipped in their temples. It is obſervable, that Herodotus in particular ſcruples not, in many paſſages, to aſcribe envy to the gods; a ſentiment, of all others, the moſt ſuitable to a mean and deviliſh nature. The pagan hymns, however, ſung in public worſhip, contained nothing but epithets of praiſe; even while the actions aſcribed to the gods were the moſt barbarous and deteſtable. When Timotheus the poet recited a hymn to Diana, in which he enumerated, with the greateſt eulogies, all the actions and attributes of that cruel, capricious goddeſs: "May your daughter," ſaid one preſent, "become ſuch as the deity whom you celebrate †."

But as men farther exalt their idea of their divinity, it is their notion of his power and knowledge only, not of his goodneſs, which is improved. On the contrary, in proportion to the ſuppoſed extent of his ſcience and authority, their terrors naturally augment; while they believe, that no ſecrecy can conceal them from his ſcrutiny, and that even the inmoſt receſſes of their breaſt lie open before him. They muſt then be careful not to form expreſsly any ſentiment of blame and diſapprobation. All muſt be applauſe, raviſhment, ecſtaſy. And while their gloomy apprehenſions make them aſcribe to him meaſures of conduct, which,

* It was conſidered among the ancients as a very extraordinary, philoſophical paradox, that the preſence of the gods was not confined to the heavens, but were extended every where; as we learn from Lucian. *Hermotimus ſive de ſectis.*

† Plutarch. de Superſtit.

which, in human creatures, would be highly blamed, they muſt ſtill affect to praiſe and admire that conduct in the object of their devotional addreſſes. Thus it may ſafely be affirmed, that popular religions are really, in the conception of their more vulgar votaries, a ſpecies of demoniſm; and the higher the deity is exalted in power and knowledge, the lower of courſe is he depreſſed in goodneſs and benevolence; whatever epithets of praiſe may be beſtowed on him by his amazed adorers. Among idolaters, the words may be falſe, and belie the ſecret opinion: but among more exalted religioniſts, the opinion itſelf contracts a kind of falſehood, and belies the inward ſentiment. The heart ſecretly deteſts ſuch meaſures of cruel and implacable vengeance; but the judgment dares not but pronounce them perfect and adorable. And the additional miſery of this inward ſtruggle aggravates all the other terrors, by which theſe unhappy victims to ſuperſtition are for ever haunted.

Lucian * obſerves, that a young man, who reads the hiſtory of the gods in Homer or Heſiod, and finds their factions, wars, injuſtice, inceſt, adultery, and other immoralities ſo highly celebrated, is much ſurprized afterwards, when he comes into the world, to obſerve that puniſhments are by law inflicted on the ſame actions, which he had been taught to aſcribe to ſuperior beings. The contradiction is ſtill perhaps ſtronger between the repreſentations given us by ſome later religions and our natural ideas of generoſity, lenity, impartiality, and juſtice; and, in proportion to the multiplied terrors of theſe religions, the barbarous conceptions of the divinity are multiplied upon us †. Nothing can preſerve untainted the genuine principles of

* Necyomantia. † See Note [EEE.]

of morals in our judgment of human conduct, but the abſolute neceſſity of theſe principles to the exiſtence of ſociety. If common conception can indulge princes in a ſyſtem of ethics, ſomewhat different from that which ſhould regulate private perſons; how much more thoſe ſuperior beings, whoſe attributes, views, and nature, are ſo totally unknown to us? *Sunt ſuperis ſua jura* *. The gods have maxims of juſtice peculiar to themſelves.

SECT. XIV. *Bad Influence of popular Religions on Morality.*

HERE I cannot forbear obſerving a fact, which may be worth the attention of ſuch as make human nature the object of their inquiry. It is certain, that, in every religion, however ſublime the verbal definition which it gives of its divinity, many of the votaries, perhaps the greateſt number, will ſtill ſeek the divine favour, not by virtue and good morals, which alone can be acceptable to a perfect being, but either by frivolous obſervances, by intemperate zeal, by rapturous ecſtaſies, or by the belief of myſterious and abſurd opinions. The leaſt part of the Sadder, as well as of the Pentateuch, conſiſts in precepts of morality; and we may alſo be aſſured, that that part was always the leaſt obſerved and regarded. When the old Romans were attacked with a peſtilence, they never aſcribed their ſufferings to their vices, or dreamed of repentance and amendment. They never thought, that they were the general robbers of the world, whoſe ambition and avarice made deſolate the earth, and reduced opulent nations

* Ovid. Metam. lib. ix. 501.

nations to want and beggary. They only created a dictator †, in order to drive a nail into a door; and by that means, they thought that they had ſufficiently appeaſed their incenſed deity.

In Ægina, one faction forming a conſpiracy, barbarouſly and treacherouſly aſſaſſinated ſeven hundred of their fellow-citizens; and carried their fury ſo far, that, one miſerable fugitive having fled to the temple, they cut off his hands by which he clung to the gates; and carrying him out of holy ground, immediately murdered him. "By this impiety," ſays Herodotus *, (not by the other many cruel aſſaſſinations), "they offended the gods, and contracted an inexpiable guilt."

Nay, if we ſhould ſuppoſe, what never happens, that a popular religion were found, in which it was expreſsly declared, that nothing but morality could gain the divine favour; if an order of prieſts were inſtituted to inculcate this opinion, in daily ſermons, and with all the arts of perſuaſion; yet ſo inveterate are the people's prejudices, that, for want of ſome other ſuperſtition, they would make the very attendance on theſe ſermons the eſſentials of religion, rather than place them in virtue and good morals. The ſublime prologue of Zaleucus's ‡ laws inſpired not the Locrians, ſo far as we can learn, with any ſounder notions of the meaſures of acceptance with the deity, than were familiar to the other Greeks.

This obſervation, then, holds univerſally: but ſtill one may be at ſome loſs to account for it. It is not ſufficient to obſerve, that the people, every where, degrade their deities into a ſimilitude with themſelves, and

† Called Dictator clavis figendæ cauſa. T. Livii, l. vii. c. 3.

* Lib. vi. ‡ To be found in Diod. Sic. lib. xii.

and conſider them merely as a ſpecies of human creatures, ſomewhat more potent and intelligent. This will not remove the difficulty. For there is no man ſo ſtupid, as that, judging by his natural reaſon, he would not eſteem virtue and honeſty the moſt valuable qualities which any perſon could poſſeſs. Why not aſcribe the ſame ſentiment to his deity? Why not make all religion, or the chief part of it, to conſiſt in theſe attainments?

Nor is it ſatisfactory to ſay, that the practice of morality is more difficult than that of ſuperſtition; and is therefore rejected. For, not to mention the exceſſive penances of the Brachmans and Talapoins; it is certain, that the Rhamadan of the Turks, during which the poor wretches, for many days, often in the hotteſt months of the year, and in ſome of the hotteſt climates of the world, remain without eating or drinking from the riſing to the ſetting ſun; this Rhamadan, I ſay, muſt be more ſevere than the practice of any moral duty, even to the moſt vicious and depraved of mankind. The four lents of the Muſcovites, and the auſterities of ſome Roman Catholics, appear more diſagreeable than meekneſs and benevolence. In ſhort, all virtue, when men are reconciled to it by ever ſo little practice, is agreeable: all ſuperſtition is for ever odious and burdenſome.

Perhaps the following account may be received as a true ſolution of the difficulty. The duties which a man performs as a friend or parent, ſeem merely owing to his benefactor or children; nor can he be wanting to theſe duties without breaking through all the ties of nature and morality. A ſtrong inclination may prompt him to the performance: a ſentiment of order and

and moral obligation joins its force to theſe natural ties: and the whole man, if truly virtuous, is drawn to his duty, without any effort or endeavour. Even with regard to the virtues which are more auſtere, and more founded on reflection, ſuch as public ſpirit, filial duty, temperance, or integrity; the moral obligation, in our apprehenſion, removes all pretenſion to religious merit; and the virtuous conduct is deemed no more than what we owe to ſociety and to ourſelves. In all this, a ſuperſtitious man finds nothing which he has properly performed for the ſake of this deity, or which can peculiarly recommend him to the divine favour and protection. He conſiders not, that the moſt genuine method of ſerving the divinity is by promoting the happineſs of his creatures. He ſtill looks out for ſome more immediate ſervice of the Supreme Being, in order to allay thoſe terrors with which he is haunted. And any practice recommended to him, which either ſerves to no purpoſe in life, or offers the ſtrongeſt violence to his natural inclinations; that practice he will the more readily embrace, on account of thoſe very circumſtances which ſhould make him abſolutely reject it. It ſeems the more purely religious, becauſe it proceeds from no mixture of any other motive or conſideration. And if, for its ſake, he ſacrifices much of his eaſe and quiet, his claim of merit appears ſtill to riſe upon him in proportion to the zeal and devotion which he diſcovers. In reſtoring a loan, or paying a debt, his divinity is nowiſe beholden to him; becauſe theſe acts of juſtice are what he was bound to perform, and what many would have performed, were there no God in the univerſe. But if he faſt a day, or give himſelf a ſound whipping, this has a direct reference, in his opinion, to the ſervice

of God. No other motive could engage him to ſuch auſterities. By theſe diſtinguiſhed marks of devotion, he has now acquired the divine favour; and may expect, in recompence, protection and ſafety in this world, and eternal happineſs in the next.

Hence the greateſt crimes have been found, in many inſtances, compatible with a ſuperſtitious piety and devotion: Hence it is juſtly regarded as unſafe to draw any certain inference in favour of a man's morals, from the fervour or ſtrictneſs of his religious exerciſes, even though he himſelf believe them ſincere. Nay, it has been obſerved, that enormities of the blackeſt dye have been rather apt to produce ſuperſtitious terrors, and increaſe the religious paſſion. Bomilcar, having formed a conſpiracy for aſſaſſinating at once the whole ſenate of Carthage, and invading the liberties of his country, loſt the opportunity, from a continual regard to omens and prophecies. "Thoſe who undertake the moſt criminal and moſt dangerous enterprizes, are commonly the moſt ſuperſtitious;" as an ancient hiſtorian * remarks on this occaſion. Their devotion and ſpiritual faith, riſe with their fears. Catiline was not contented with the eſtabliſhed deities, and received rites of the national religion: His anxious terrors made him ſeek new inventions of this kind †; which he never probably had dreamed of, had he remained a good citizen, and obedient to the laws of his country.

To which we may add, that after the commiſſion of crimes, there ariſe remorſes and ſecret horrors, which give no reſt to the mind, but make it have recourſe to religious rites and ceremonies, as expiations of its offences. Whatever weakens or diſorders the internal frame, promotes the intereſts of ſuperſtition: And nothing

* Diod. Sic. lib. xv.

† Cic. Catil. i. Salluſt. de bello Catil.

thing is more deſtructive to them than a manly, ſteady virtue, which either preſerves us from diſaſtrous, melancholy accidents, or teaches us to bear them. During ſuch calm ſunſhine of the mind, theſe ſpectres of falſe divinity never make their appearance. On the other hand, while we abandon ourſelves to the natural undiſciplined ſuggeſtions of our timid and anxious hearts, every kind of barbarity is aſcribed to the Supreme Being, from the terrors with which we are agitated; and every kind of caprice, from the methods which we embrace in order to appeaſe him. Barbarity, caprice; theſe qualities, however nominally diſguiſed, we may univerſally obſerve, from the ruling character of the deity in popular religions. Even prieſts, inſtead of correcting theſe depraved ideas of mankind, have often been found ready to foſter and encourage them. The more tremendous the divinity is repreſented, the more tame and ſubmiſſive do men become to his miniſters; and the more unaccountable the meaſures of acceptance required by him, the more neceſſary does it become to abandon our natural reaſon, and yield to their ghoſtly guidance and direction. Thus it may be allowed, that the artifices of men aggravate our natural infirmities and follies of this kind, but never originally beget them. Their root ſtrikes deeper into the mind, and ſprings from the eſſential and univerſal properties of human nature.

SECT. XV. *General Corollary.*

THOUGH the ſtupidity of men, barbarous and uninſtructed, be ſo great, that they may not ſee a ſovereign author in the more obvious works of nature, to which they are ſo much familiarized; yet it ſcarcely ſeems

poſſible, that any one of good underſtanding ſhould reject that idea, when once it is ſuggeſted to him. A purpoſe, an intention, a deſign is evident in every thing; and when our comprehenſion is ſo far enlarged as to contemplate the firſt riſe of this viſible ſyſtem, we muſt adopt, with the ſtrongeſt conviction, the idea of ſome intelligent cauſe or author. The uniform maxims, too, which prevail throughout the whole frame of the univerſe, naturally, if not neceſſarily, lead us to conceive this intelligence as ſingle and undivided, where the prejudices of education oppoſe not ſo reaſonable a theory. Even the contrarieties of nature, by diſcovering themſelves every where, become proofs of ſome conſiſtent plan, and eſtabliſh one ſingle purpoſe or intention, however inexplicable and incomprehenſible.

Good and ill are univerſally intermingled and confounded; happineſs and miſery, wiſdom and folly, virtue and vice. Nothing is pure and entirely of a piece. All advantages are attended with diſadvantages. An univerſal compenſation prevails in all conditions of being and exiſtence. And it is not poſſible for us, by our moſt chimerical wiſhes, to form the idea of a ſtation or ſituation altogether deſirable. The draughts of life, according to the poet's fiction, are always mixed from the veſſels on each hand of Jupiter: Or if any cup be preſented altogether pure, it is drawn only, as the ſame poet tells us, from the left-handed veſſel.

The more exquiſite any good is, of which a ſmall ſpecimen is afforded us; the ſharper is the evil allied to it; and few exceptions are found to this uniform law of nature. The moſt ſprightly wit borders on madneſs; the higheſt effuſions of joy produce the deepeſt.

deepeſt melancholy; the moſt raviſhing pleaſures are attended with the moſt cruel laſſitude and diſguſt; the moſt flattering hopes make way for the ſevereſt diſappointments. And, in general, no courſe of life has ſuch ſafety (for happineſs is not to be dreamed of) as the temperate and moderate, which maintains, as far as poſſible, a mediocrity, and a kind of inſenſibility in every thing.

As the good, the great, the ſublime, the raviſhing, are found eminently in the genuine principles of theiſm; it may be expected, from the analogy of nature, that the baſe, the abſurd, the mean, the terrifying, will be equally diſcovered in religious fictions and chimeras.

The univerſal propenſity to believe in inviſible, intelligent power, if not an original inſtinct, being at leaſt a general attendant of human nature, may be conſidered as a kind of mark or ſtamp, which the divine workman has ſet upon his work; and nothing ſurely can more dignify mankind, than to be thus ſelected from all other parts of the creation, and to bear the image or impreſſion of the univerſal Creator. But conſult this image as it appears in the popular religions of the world. How is the deity diſfigured in our repreſentations of him! What caprice, abſurdity, and immorality are attributed to him! How much is he degraded even below the character, which we ſhould naturally, in common life, aſcribe to a man of ſenſe and virtue!

What a noble privilege is it of human reaſon to attain the knowledge of the Supreme Being; and, from the viſible works of nature, be enabled to infer ſo ſublime a principle as its ſupreme Creator! But, turn the reverſe of the medal. Survey moſt nations and moſt ages. Examine the religious principles, which

have, in fact, prevailed in the world. You will ſcarcely be perſuaded, that they are any thing but ſick mens dreams: Or perhaps will regard them more as the playſome whimſies of monkies in human ſhape, than the ſerious, poſitive, dogmatical aſſeverations of a being, who dignifies himſelf with the name of rational.

Hear the verbal proteſtations of all men: Nothing ſo certain as their religious tenets. Examine their lives: You will ſcarcely think that they repoſe the ſmalleſt confidence in them.

The greateſt and trueſt zeal gives us no ſecurity againſt hypocriſy: The moſt open impiety is attended with a ſecret dread and compunction.

No theological abſurdities ſo glaring, that have not, ſometimes, been embraced by men of the greateſt and moſt cultivated underſtanding. No religious precepts ſo rigorous, that have not been adopted by the moſt voluptuous and moſt abandoned of men.

"Ignorance is the mother of Devotion:" A maxim that is proverbial, and confirmed by general experience. Look out for a people entirely deſtitute of religion: If you find them at all, be aſſured, that they are but few degrees removed from brutes.

What ſo pure as ſome of the morals included in ſome theological ſyſtems? What ſo corrupt as ſome of the practices to which theſe ſyſtems give riſe?

The comfortable views, exhibited by the belief of futurity, are raviſhing and delightful. But how quickly do they vaniſh on the appearance of its terrors, which keep a more firm and durable poſſeſſion of the human mind!

The whole is a riddle, an ænigma, an inexplicable myſtery. Doubt, uncertainty, ſuſpenſe of judgment, appear the only reſult of our moſt accurate ſcrutiny, concerning

concerning this ſubject. But ſuch is the frailty of human reaſon, and ſuch the irreſiſtible contagion of opinion, that even this deliberate doubt could ſcarcely be upheld; did we not enlarge our view, and, oppoſing one ſpecies of ſuperſtition to another, ſet them a quarrelling; while we ourſelves, during their fury and contention, happily make our eſcape into the calm, though obſcure, regions of philoſophy.

DIALOGUES

CONCERNING

NATURAL RELIGION.

PAMPHILUS to HERMIPPUS.

IT has been remarked, my Hermippus, that though the ancient philoſophers conveyed moſt of their inſtruction in the form of dialogue, this method of compoſition has been little practiſed in later ages, and has ſeldom ſucceeded in the hands of thoſe who have attempted it. Accurate and regular argument, indeed, ſuch as is now expected of philoſophical inquirers, naturally throws a man into the methodical and didactic manner; where he can immediately, without preparation, explain the point at which he aims; and thence proceed, without interruption, to deduce the proofs on which it is eſtabliſhed. To deliver a SYSTEM in converſation, ſcarcely appears natural; and while the dialogue-writer deſires, by departing from the direct ſtyle of compoſition, to give a freer air to his performance, and avoid the appearance of Author and Reader, he is apt to run into a worſe inconvenience, and convey the image of Pedagogue and Pupil. Or, if he carries on the diſpute in the natural ſpirit of good

good company, by throwing in a variety of topics, and preſerving a proper balance among the ſpeakers; he often loſes ſo much time in preparations and tranſitions, that the reader will ſcarcely think himſelf compenſated by all the graces of dialogue, for the order, brevity, and preciſion, which are ſacrificed to them.

There are ſome ſubjects, however, to which dialogue-writing is peculiarly adapted, and where it is ſtill preferable to the direct and ſimple method of compoſition.

Any point of doctrine, which is ſo obvious that it ſcarcely admits of diſpute, but at the ſame time ſo important that it cannot be too often inculcated, ſeems to require ſome ſuch method of handling it; where the novelty of the manner may compenſate the triteneſs of the ſubject; where the vivacity of converſation may enforce the precept; and where the variety of lights, preſented by various perſonages and characters, may appear neither tedious nor redundant.

Any queſtion of philoſophy, on the other hand, which is ſo obſcure and uncertain, that human reaſon can reach no fixed determination with regard to it; if it ſhould be treated at all, ſeems to lead us naturally into the ſtyle of dialogue and converſation. Reaſonable men may be allowed to differ, where no one can reaſonably be poſitive: Oppoſite ſentiments, even without any deciſion, afford an agreeable amuſement: and if the ſubject be curious and intereſting, the book carries us, in a manner, into company; and unites the two greateſt and pureſt pleaſures of human life, ſtudy, and ſociety.

Happily, theſe circumſtances are all to be found in the ſubject of NATURAL RELIGION. What truth ſo obvious, ſo certain, as the Being of a God, which the moſt

moſt ignorant ages have acknowledged, for which the moſt refined geniuſes have ambitiouſly ſtriven to produce new proofs and arguments? What truth ſo important as this, which is the ground of all our hopes, the ſureſt foundation of morality, the firmeſt ſupport of ſociety, and the only principle which ought never to be a moment abſent from our thoughts and meditations? But in treating of this obvious and important truth; what obſcure queſtions occur, concerning the Nature of that divine Being; his attributes, his decrees, his plan of providence? Theſe have been always ſubjected to the diſputations of men: Concerning theſe, human reaſon has not reached any certain determination: But theſe are topics ſo intereſting, that we cannot reſtrain our reſtleſs inquiry with regard to them; though nothing but doubt, uncertainty, and contradiction, have as yet been the reſult of our moſt accurate reſearches.

This I had lately occaſion to obſerve, while I paſſed, as uſual, part of the ſummer-ſeaſon with CLEANTHES, and was preſent at thoſe converſations of his with PHILO and DEMEA, of which I gave you lately ſome imperfect account. Your curioſity, you then told me, was ſo excited, that I muſt of neceſſity enter into a more exact detail of their reaſonings, and diſplay thoſe various ſyſtems which they advanced with regard to ſo delicate a ſubject as that of Natural Religion. The remarkable contraſt in their characters ſtill farther raiſed your expectations; while you oppoſed the accurate philoſophical turn of Cleanthes to the careleſs ſcepticiſm of Philo, or compared either of their diſpoſitions with the rigid inflexible orthodoxy of Demea. My youth rendered me a mere auditor of their diſputes; and that curioſity natural to the early ſeaſon

of

of life, has ſo deeply imprinted in my memory the whole chain and connection of their arguments, that, I hope, I ſhall not omit or confound any conſiderable part of them in the recital.

PART I.

AFTER I joined the company, whom I found ſitting in Cleanthes's library, Demea paid Cleanthes ſome compliments, on the great care which he took of my education, and on his unwearied perſeverance and conſtancy in all his friendſhips. The father of Pamphilus, ſaid he, was your intimate friend: The ſon is your pupil; and may indeed be regarded as your adopted ſon, were we to judge by the pains which you beſtow in conveying to him every uſeful branch of literature and ſcience. You are no more wanting, I am perſuaded, in prudence than in induſtry. I ſhall, therefore, communicate to you a maxim which I have obſerved with regard to my own children, that I may learn how far it agrees with your practice. The method I follow in their education, is founded on the ſaying of an ancient, "That ſtudents "of philoſophy ought firſt to learn Logics, then Ethics, "next Phyſics, laſt of all the nature of the Gods *." This ſcience of Natural Theology, according to him, being the moſt profound and abſtruſe of any, required the matureſt judgment in its ſtudents; and none but

a

* Chryſippus apud Plut. de Repug. Stoicorum.

a mind, enriched with all the other ſciences, can ſafely be entruſted with it.

Are you ſo late, ſays Philo, in teaching your children the principles of religion? Is there no danger of their neglecting, or rejecting altogether, thoſe opinions, of which they have heard ſo little during the whole courſe of their education? It is only as a ſcience, replied Demea, ſubjected to human reaſoning and diſputation, that I poſtpone the ſtudy of Natural Theology. To ſeaſon their minds with early piety, is my chief care; and by continual precept and inſtruction, and I hope too by example, I imprint deeply on their tender minds an habitual reverence for all the principles of religion. While they paſs through every other ſcience, I ſtill remark the uncertainty of each part; the eternal diſputations of men; the obſcurity of all philoſophy; and the ſtrange, ridiculous concluſions, which ſome of the greateſt geniuſes have derived from the principles of mere human reaſon. Having thus tamed their mind to a proper ſubmiſſion and ſelf-diffidence, I have no longer any ſcruple of opening to them the greateſt myſteries of religion; nor apprehend any danger from that aſſuming arrogance of philoſophy, which may lead them to reject the moſt eſtabliſhed doctrines and opinions.

Your precaution, ſays Philo, of ſeaſoning your childrens minds early with piety, is certainly very reaſonable; and no more than is requiſite in this profane and irreligious age. But what I chiefly admire in your plan of education, is your method of drawing advantage from the very principles of philoſophy and learning, which, by inſpiring pride and ſelf-ſufficiency, have commonly, in all ages, been found ſo deſtructive to the principles of religion. The vulgar, indeed, we may

may remark, who are unacquainted with ſcience and profound inquiry, obſerving the endleſs diſputes of the learned, have commonly a thorough contempt for philoſophy; and rivet themſelves the faſter, by that means, in the great points of theology which have been taught them. Thoſe who enter a little into ſtudy and inquiry, finding many appearances of evidence in doctrines the neweſt and moſt extraordinary, think nothing too difficult for human reaſon; and preſumptuouſly breaking through all fences, profane the inmoſt ſanctuaries of the temple. But Cleanthes will, I hope, agree with me, that, after we have abandoned ignorance, the ſureſt remedy, there is ſtill one expedient left to prevent this profane liberty. Let Demea's principles be improved and cultivated: Let us become thoroughly ſenſible of the weakneſs, blindneſs, and narrow limits, of human reaſon: Let us duly conſider its uncertainty and endleſs contrarieties, even in ſubjects of common life and practice: Let the errors and deceits of our very ſenſes be ſet before us; the inſuperable difficulties which attend firſt principles in all ſyſtems; the contradictions which adhere to the very ideas of matter, cauſe, and effect, extenſion, ſpace, time, motion; and, in a word, quantity of all kinds, the object of the only ſcience that can fairly pretend to any certainty or evidence. When theſe topics are diſplayed in their full light, as they are by ſome philoſophers, and almoſt all divines; who can retain ſuch confidence in this frail faculty of reaſon, as to pay any regard to its determinations in points ſo ſublime, ſo abſtruſe, ſo remote from common life and experience? When the coherence of the parts of a ſtone, or even that compoſition of parts which renders it extended; when theſe familiar objects, I ſay, are ſo inexplicable,

and

and contain circumſtances ſo repugnant and contradictory; with what aſſurance can we decide concerning the origin of worlds, or trace their hiſtory from eternity to eternity?

While Philo pronounced theſe words, I could obſerve a ſmile in the countenance both of Demea and Cleanthes. That of Demea ſeemed to imply an unreſerved ſatisfaction in the doctrines delivered: But, in Cleanthes's features, I could diſtinguiſh an air of fineſſe; as if he perceived ſome raillery or artificial malice in the reaſonings of Philo.

You propoſe, then, Philo, ſaid Cleanthes, to erect religious faith on philoſophical ſcepticiſm; and you think, that if certainty or evidence be expelled from every other ſubject of inquiry, it will all retire to theſe theological doctrines, and there acquire a ſuperior force and authority. Whether your ſcepticiſm be as abſolute and ſincere as you pretend, we ſhall learn by and by, when the company breaks up: We ſhall then ſee whether you go out at the door or the window; and whether you really doubt if your body has gravity, or can be injured by its fall; according to popular opinion, derived from our fallacious ſenſes, and more fallacious experience. And this conſideration, Demea, may, I think, fairly ſerve to abate our ill-will to this humorous ſect of the ſceptics. If they be thoroughly in earneſt, they will not long trouble the world with their doubts, cavils, and diſputes: If they be only in jeſt, they are, perhaps, bad railers; but can never be very dangerous, either to the ſtate, to philoſophy, or to religion.

In reality, Philo, continued he, it ſeems certain, that though a man, in a fluſh of humour, after intenſe reflection on the many contradictions and imperfections

of

of human reaſon, may entirely renounce all belief and opinion; it is impoſſible for him to perſevere in this total ſcepticiſm, or make it appear in his conduct for a few hours. External objects preſs in upon him: Paſſions ſolicit him: His philoſophical melancholy diſſipates; and even the utmoſt violence upon his own temper will not be able, during any time, to preſerve the poor appearance of ſcepticiſm. And for what reaſon impoſe on himſelf ſuch a violence? This is a point in which it will be impoſſible for him ever to ſatisfy himſelf, conſiſtently with his ſceptical principles: So that, upon the whole, nothing could be more ridiculous than the principles of the ancient Pyrrhonians; if in reality they endeavoured, as is pretended, to extend, throughout, the ſame ſcepticiſm, which they had learned from the declamations of their ſchools, and which they ought to have confined to them.

In this view, there appears a great reſemblance between the ſects of the Stoics and Pyrrhonians, though perpetual antagoniſts: and both of them ſeem founded on this erroneous maxim, That what a man can perform ſometimes, and in ſome diſpoſitions, he can perform always, and in every diſpoſition. When the mind, by Stoical reflections, is elevated into a ſublime enthuſiaſm of virtue, and ſtrongly ſmit with any ſpecies of honour or public good, the utmoſt bodily pain and ſufferings will not prevail over ſuch a high ſenſe of duty; and it is poſſible, perhaps, by its means, even to ſmile and exult in the midſt of tortures. If this ſometimes may be the caſe in fact and reality, much more may a philoſopher, in his ſchool, or even in his cloſet, work himſelf up to ſuch an enthuſiaſm, and ſupport in imagination the acuteſt pain or moſt calamitous event which he can poſſibly conceive. But how

how ſhall he ſupport this enthuſiaſm itſelf? The bent of his mind relaxes, and cannot be recalled at pleaſure: Avocations lead him aſtray: Misfortunes attack him unawares: And the philoſopher ſinks by degrees into the plebeian.

I allow of your compariſon between the Stoics and Sceptics, replied Philo. But you may obſerve, at the ſame time, that though the mind cannot, in Stoicism, ſupport the higheſt flights of philoſophy; yet, even when it ſinks lower, it ſtill retains ſomewhat of its former diſpoſition; and the effects of the Stoic's reaſoning will appear in his conduct in common life, and through the whole tenor of his actions. The ancient ſchools, particularly that of Zeno, produced examples of virtue and conſtancy which ſeem aſtoniſhing to preſent times.

> Vain Wiſdom all, and falſe Philoſophy.
> Yet with a pleaſing ſorcery could charm
> Pain, for a while, or anguiſh; and excite
> Fallacious Hope, or arm the obdurate breaſt
> With ſtubborn Patience, as with triple ſteel.

In like manner, if a man has accuſtomed himſelf to ſceptical conſiderations on the uncertainty and narrow limits of reaſon, he will not entirely forget them when he turns his reflection on other ſubjects; but in all his philoſophical principles and reaſoning, I dare not ſay in his common conduct, he will be found different from thoſe, who either never formed any opinions in the caſe, or have entertained ſentiments more favourable to human reaſon.

To whatever length any one may puſh his ſpeculative principles of ſcepticiſm, he muſt act, I own, and live, and converſe, like other men; and for this conduct

duct, he is not obliged to give any other reaſon, than the abſolute neceſſity he lies under of ſo doing. If he ever carries his ſpeculations farther than this neceſſity conſtrains him, and philoſophizes either on natural or moral ſubjects, he is allured by a certain pleaſure and ſatisfaction which he finds in employing himſelf after that manner. He conſiders, beſides, that every one, even in common life, is conſtrained to have more or leſs of this philoſophy; that from our earlieſt infancy we make continual advances in forming more general principles of conduct and reaſoning; that the larger experience we acquire, and the ſtronger reaſon we are endued with, we always render our principles the more general and comprehenſive; and that what we call Philoſophy, is nothing but a more regular and methodical operation of the ſame kind. To philoſophize on ſuch ſubjects, is nothing eſſentially different from reaſoning in common life; and we may only expect greater ſtability, if not greater truth, from our philoſophy, on account of its exacter and more ſcrupulous method of proceeding.

But when we look beyond human affairs, and the properties of the ſurrounding bodies: When we carry our ſpeculations into the two eternities, before and after the preſent ſtate of things; into the creation and formation of the univerſe; the exiſtence and properties of ſpirits; the powers and operations of one univerſal Spirit, exiſting without beginning and without end; omnipotent, omniſcient, immutable, infinite, and incomprehenſible: We muſt be far removed from the ſmalleſt tendency to ſcepticiſm, not to be apprehenſive, that we have here got beyond the reach of our faculties. So long as we confine our ſpeculations to trade, or morals, or politics, or criticiſm, we make appeals,

every moment, to common ſenſe and experience, which ſtrengthen our philoſophical concluſions, and remove (at leaſt in part) the ſuſpicion which we ſo juſtly entertain with regard to every reaſoning that is very ſubtile and refined. But, in theological reaſonings, we have not this advantage; while at the ſame time we are employed upon objects, which, we muſt be ſenſible, are too large for our graſp, and, of all others, require moſt to be familiarized to our apprehenſion. We are like foreigners in a ſtrange country, to whom every thing muſt ſeem ſuſpicious, and who are in danger every moment of tranſgreſſing againſt the laws and cuſtoms of the people with whom they live and converſe. We know not how far we ought to truſt our vulgar methods of reaſoning on ſuch a ſubject; ſince, even in common life, and in that province which is peculiarly appropriated to them, we cannot account for them, and are entirely guided by a kind of inſtinct or neceſſity in employing them.

All ſceptics pretend, that, if reaſon be conſidered in an abſtract view, it furniſhes invincible arguments againſt itſelf; and that we could never retain any conviction or aſſurance, on any ſubject, were not the ſceptical reaſonings ſo refined and ſubtile, that they are not able to counterpoiſe the more ſolid and more natural arguments derived from the ſenſes and experience. But it is evident, whenever our arguments loſe this advantage, and run wide of common life, that the moſt refined ſcepticiſm comes to be upon a footing with them, and is able to oppoſe and counterbalance them. The one has no more weight than the other. The mind muſt remain in ſuſpenſe between them; and it is that very ſuſpenſe or balance which is the triumph of ſcepticiſm.

But

But I obſerve, ſays Cleanthes, with regard to you, Philo, and all ſpeculative ſceptics, that your doctrine and practice are as much at variance in the moſt abſtruſe points of theory, as in the conduct of common life. Wherever evidence diſcovers itſelf, you adhere to it, notwithſtanding your pretended ſcepticiſm; and I can obſerve, too, ſome of your ſect to be as deciſive as thoſe who make greater profeſſions of certainty and aſſurance. In reality, would not a man be ridiculous, who pretended to reject Newton's explication of the wonderful phenomenon of the rainbow, becauſe that explication gives a minute anatomy of the rays of light; a ſubject, forſooth, too refined for human comprehenſion? And what would you ſay to one, who, having nothing particular to object to the arguments of Copernicus and Galilæo for the motion of the earth, ſhould withhold his aſſent, on that general principle, That theſe ſubjects were too magnificent and remote, to be explained by the narrow and fallacious reaſon of mankind?

There is indeed a kind of brutiſh and ignorant ſcepticiſm, as you well obſerved, which gives the vulgar a general prejudice againſt what they do not eaſily underſtand, and makes them reject every principle which requires elaborate reaſoning to prove and eſtabliſh it. This ſpecies of ſcepticiſm is fatal to knowledge, not to religion; ſince we find, that thoſe who make greateſt profeſſion of it, give often their aſſent, not only to the great truths of theiſm and natural theology, but even to the moſt abſurd tenets which a traditional ſuperſtition has recommended to them. They firmly believe in witches; though they will not believe nor attend to the moſt ſimple propoſition of Euclid. But the refined and philoſophical ſceptics fall into an inconſiſtence of

an oppoſite nature. They puſh their reſearches into the moſt abſtruſe corners of ſcience; and their aſſent attends them in every ſtep, proportioned to the evidence which they meet with. They are even obliged to acknowledge, that the moſt abſtruſe and remote objects are thoſe which are beſt explained by philoſophy. Light is in reality anatomized: The true ſyſtem of the heavenly bodies is diſcovered and aſcertained. But the nouriſhment of bodies by food is ſtill an inexplicable myſtery: The coheſion of the parts of matter is ſtill incomprehenſible. Theſe ſceptics, therefore, are obliged, in every queſtion, to conſider each particular evidence apart, and proportion their aſſent to the preciſe degree of evidence which occurs. This is their practice in all natural, mathematical, moral, and political ſcience. And why not the ſame, I aſk, in the theological and religious? Why muſt concluſions of this nature be alone rejected on the general preſumption of the inſufficiency of human reaſon, without any particular diſcuſſion of the evidence? Is not ſuch an unequal conduct a plain proof of prejudice and paſſion?

Our ſenſes, you ſay, are fallacious; our underſtanding erroneous; our ideas, even of the moſt familiar objects, extenſion, duration, motion, full of abſurdities and contradictions. You defy me to ſolve the difficulties, or reconcile the repugnancies, which you diſcover in them. I have not capacity for ſo great an undertaking: I have not leiſure for it: I perceive it to be ſuperfluous. Your own conduct, in every circumſtance, refutes your principles; and ſhews the firmeſt reliance on all the received maxims of ſcience, morals, prudence, and behaviour.

I

I ſhall never aſſ nt to ſo harſh an opinion as that of a celebrated writer *, who ſays, that the ſceptics are not a ſect of philoſophers: They are only a ſect of liars. I may, however, affirm, (I hope, without offence), that they are a ſect of jeſters or railers. But, for my part, whenever I find myſelf diſpoſed to mirth and amuſement, I ſhall certainly chooſe my entertainment of a leſs perplexing and abſtruſe nature. A comedy, a novel, or at moſt a hiſtory, ſeems a more natural recreation than ſuch metaphyſical ſubtilties and abſtractions.

In vain would the ſceptic make a diſtinction between ſcience and common life, or between one ſcience and another. The arguments employed in all, if juſt, are of a ſimilar nature, and contain the ſame force and evidence. Or if there be any difference among them, the advantage lies entirely on the ſide of theology and natural religion. Many principles of mechanics are founded on very abſtruſe reaſoning; yet no man who has any pretenſions to ſcience, even no ſpeculative ſceptic, pretends to entertain the leaſt doubt with regard to them. The Copernican ſyſtem contains the moſt ſurpriſing paradox, and the moſt contrary to our natural conceptions, to appearances, and to our very ſenſes: yet even monks and inquiſitors are now conſtrained to withdraw their oppoſition to it. And ſhall Philo, a man of ſo liberal a genius, and extenſive knowledge, entertain any general undiſtinguiſhed ſcruples with regard to the religious hypotheſis, which is founded on the ſimpleſt and moſt obvious arguments; and, unleſs it meets with artificial obſtacles, has ſuch eaſy acceſs and admiſſion into the mind of man?

* L'art de penſer.

And here we may obſerve, continued he, turning himſelf towards Demea, a pretty curious circumſtance in the hiſtory of the ſciences. After the union of philoſophy with the popular religion, upon the firſt eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, nothing was more uſual, among all religious teachers, than declamations againſt reaſon, againſt the ſenſes, againſt every principle derived merely from human reſearch and inquiry. All the topics of the ancient Academics were adopted by the Fathers; and thence propagated, for ſeveral ages, in every ſchool and pulpit throughout Chriſtendom. The Reformers embraced the ſame principles of reaſoning, or rather declamation; and all panegyrics on the excellency of faith were ſure to be interlarded with ſome ſevere ſtrokes of ſatire againſt natural reaſon. A celebrated prelate, too,* of the Romiſh communion, a man of the moſt extenſive learning, who wrote a demonſtration of Chriſtianity, has alſo compoſed a treatiſe, which contains all the cavils of the boldeſt and moſt determined Pyrrhoniſm. Locke ſeems to have been the firſt Chriſtian, who ventured openly to aſſert, that faith was nothing but a ſpecies of reaſon; that religion was only a branch of philoſophy; and that a chain of arguments, ſimilar to that which eſtabliſhed any truth in morals, politics, or phyſics, was always employed in diſcovering all the principles of theology, natural and revealed. The ill uſe which Bayle, and other libertines, made of the philoſophical ſcepticiſm of the fathers and firſt reformers, ſtill farther propagated the judicious ſentiment of Mr Locke: And it is now, in a manner, avowed, by all pretenders to reaſoning and philoſophy, that Atheiſt and Sceptic are almoſt ſynonymous. And as it is certain, that no man is

* Monſ. Huet.

is in earneſt when he profeſſes the latter principle; I would fain hope, that there are as few who ſeriouſly maintain the former.

Don't you remember, ſaid Philo, the excellent ſaying of Lord Bacon on this head? That a little philoſophy, replied Cleanthes, makes a man an Atheiſt: A great deal converts him to religion. That is a very judicious remark too, ſaid Philo. But what I have in my eye is another paſſage, where, having mentioned David's fool, who ſaid in his heart there is no God, this great philoſopher obſerves, that the Atheiſts now-a-days have a double ſhare of folly: for they are not contented to ſay in their hearts there is no God, but they alſo utter that impiety with their lips; and are thereby guilty of multiplied indiſcretion and imprudence. Such people, though they were ever ſo much in earneſt, cannot, methinks, be very formidable.

But though you ſhould rank me in this claſs of fools, I cannot forbear communicating a remark that occurs to me, from the hiſtory of the religious and irreligious ſcepticiſm with which you have entertained us. It appears to me, that there are ſtrong ſymptoms of prieſtcraft in the whole progreſs of this affair. During ignorant ages, ſuch as thoſe which followed the diſſolution of the ancient ſchools, the prieſts perceived, that atheiſm, deiſm, or hereſy of any kind, could only proceed from the preſumptuous queſtioning of received opinions, and from a belief that human reaſon was equal to every thing. Education had then a mighty influence over the minds of men, and was almoſt equal in force to thoſe ſuggeſtions of the ſenſes and common underſtanding, by which the moſt determined ſceptic muſt allow himſelf to be governed. But at preſent, when the influence of education is much diminiſhed,

and men, from a more open commerce of the world, have learned to compare the popular principles of different nations and ages, our ſagacious divines have changed their whole ſyſtem of philoſophy, and talk the language of Stoics, Platoniſts, and Peripatetics, not that of Pyrrhonians and Academics. If we diſtruſt human reaſon, we have now no other principle to lead us into religion. Thus, ſceptics in one age, dogmatiſts in another; whichever ſyſtem beſt ſuits the purpoſe of theſe reverend gentlemen, in giving them an aſcendant over mankind, they are ſure to make it their favourite principle and eſtabliſhed tenet.

It is very natural, ſaid Cleanthes, for men to embrace thoſe principles by which they find they can beſt defend their doctrines; nor need we have any recourſe to prieſtcraft to account for ſo reaſonable an expedient. And ſurely nothing can afford a ſtronger preſumption, that any ſet of principles are true, and ought to be embraced, than to obſerve, that they tend to the confirmation of true religion, and ſerve to confound the cavils of Atheiſts, Libertines, and Freethinkers of all denominations.

PART II.

I MUST own, Cleanthes, ſaid Demea, that nothing can more ſurpriſe me, than the light in which you have all along put this argument. By the whole tenor of

of your diſcourſe, one would imagine that you were maintaining the Being of a God, againſt the cavils of Atheiſts and Infidels; and were neceſſitated to become a champion for that fundamental principle of all religion. But this, I hope, is not, by any means, a queſtion among us. No man, no man at leaſt of common ſenſe, I am perſuaded, ever entertained a ſerious doubt with regard to a truth ſo certain and ſelf-evident. The queſtion is not concerning the Being, but the Nature, of GOD. This I affirm, from the infirmities of human underſtanding, to be altogether incomprehenſible and unknown to us. The eſſence of that Supreme Mind, his attributes, the manner of his exiſtence, the very nature of his duration; theſe, and every particular which regards ſo divine a being, are myſterious to men. Finite, weak, and blind creatures, we ought to humble ourſelves in his auguſt preſence; and, conſcious of our frailties, adore in ſilence his infinite perfections, which eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. They are covered in a deep cloud from human curioſity: It is profaneneſs to attempt penetrating through theſe ſacred obſcurities: and next to the impiety of denying his exiſtence, is the temerity of prying into his nature and eſſence, decrees and attributes.

But leſt you ſhould think that my piety has here got the better of my philoſophy, I ſhall ſupport my opinion, if it needs any ſupport, by a very great authority. I might cite all the divines, almoſt, from the foundation of Chriſtianity, who have ever treated of this or any other theological ſubject: But I ſhall confine myſelf at preſent to one equally celebrated for piety and philoſophy. It is father Malebranche, who, I remember, thus

thus expreſſes himſelf *. "One ought not ſo much "(ſays he) to call God a ſpirit, in order to expreſs "poſitively what he is, as in order to ſignify that he "is not matter. He is a being infinitely perfect; of "this we cannot doubt. But in the ſame manner as "we ought not to imagine, even ſuppoſing him cor- "poreal, that he is clothed with a human body, as the "Anthropomorphites aſſerted, under colour that that "figure was the moſt perfect of any; ſo neither "ought we to imagine, that the Spirit of God has "human ideas, or bears any reſemblance to our ſpi- "rit; under colour that we know nothing more per- "fect than a human mind. We ought rather to be- "lieve, that as he comprehends the perfections of "matter, without being material ..... he com- "prehends alſo the perfections of created ſpirits, with- "out being ſpirit, in the manner we conceive ſpirit: "That his true name is, HE THAT IS; or, in other "words, Being without reſtriction, All Being, the "Being Infinite and Univerſal."

After ſo great an authority, Demea, replied Philo, as that which you have produced, and a thouſand more which you might produce, it would appear ridiculous in me to add my ſentiment, or expreſs my approbation of your doctrine. But ſurely, where reaſonable men treat theſe ſubjects, the queſtion can never be concerning the Being, but only the Nature, of the Deity. The former truth, as you will obſerve, is unqueſtionable and ſelf-evident. Nothing exiſts without a cauſe; and the original cauſe of this univerſe (whatever it be) we call GOD; and piouſly aſcribe to him every ſpecies of perfection. Whoever ſcruples this fundamental truth, deſerves every puniſhment which can be inflicted

* Recherche de la Verité, liv. 3. ch. 9.

ed among philoſophers, to wit, the greateſt ridicule, contempt, and diſapprobation. But as all perfection is entirely relative, we ought never to imagine that we comprehend the attributes of this divine Being, or to ſuppoſe that his perfections have any analogy or likeneſs to the perfections of a human creature. Wiſdom, Thought, Deſign, Knowledge; theſe we juſtly aſcribe to him; becauſe theſe words are honourable among men, and we have no other language or other conceptions by which we can expreſs our adoration of him. But let us beware, leſt we think, that our ideas anywiſe correſpond to his perfections, or that his attributes have any reſemblance to theſe qualities among men. He is infinitely ſuperior to our limited view and comprehenſion; and is more the object of worſhip in the temple, than of diſputation in the ſchools.

In reality, Cleanthes, continued he, there is no need of having recourſe to that affected ſcepticiſm, ſo diſpleaſing to you, in order to come at this determination. Our ideas reach no farther than our experience: we have no experience of divine attributes and operations: I need not conclude my ſyllogiſm; you can draw the inference yourſelf. And it is a pleaſure to me (and I hope to you too), that juſt reaſoning and ſound piety here concur in the ſame concluſion, and both of them eſtabliſh the adorably myſterious and incomprehenſible nature of the Supreme Being.

Not to loſe any time in circumlocutions, ſaid Cleanthes, addreſſing himſelf to Demea, much leſs in replying to the pious declamations of Philo; I ſhall briefly explain how I conceive this matter. Look round the world; contemplate the whole and every part of it; you will find it to be nothing but one great machine, ſubdivided into an infinite number of leſſer machines,

machines, which again admit of ſubdiviſions to a degree beyond what human ſenſes and faculties can trace and explain. All theſe various machines, and even their moſt minute parts, are adjuſted to each other with an accuracy which raviſhes into admiration all men who have ever contemplated them. The curious adapting of means to ends, throughout all nature, reſembles exactly, though it much exceeds, the productions of human contrivance; of human deſign, thought, wiſdom, and intelligence. Since, therefore, the effects reſemble each other, we are led to infer, by all the rules of analogy, that the cauſes alſo reſemble, and that the Author of Nature is ſomewhat ſimilar to the mind of man; though poſſeſſed of much larger faculties, proportioned to the grandeur of the work which he has executed. By this argument *à poſteriori*, and by this argument alone, do we prove at once the exiſtence of a Deity, and his ſimilarity to human mind and intelligence.

I ſhall be ſo free, Cleanthes, ſaid Demea, as to tell you, that from the beginning I could not approve of your concluſion concerning the ſimilarity of the Deity to men; ſtill leſs can I approve of the mediums by which you endeavour to eſtabliſh it.—What! no demonſtration of the Being of God! No abſtract arguments! No proofs *à priori!* Are theſe, which have hitherto been ſo much inſiſted on by philoſophers, all fallacy, all ſophiſm? Can we reach no farther in this ſubject than experience and probability? I will not ſay, that this is betraying the cauſe of a Deity; but ſurely, by this affected candour, you give advantages to Atheiſts, which they never could obtain by the mere dint of argument and reaſoning.

What

What I chiefly ſcruple in this ſubject, ſaid Philo, is not ſo much that all religious arguments are by Cleanthes reduced to experience, as that they appear not to be even the moſt certain and irrefragable of that inferior kind. That a ſtone will fall, that fire will burn, that the earth has ſolidity, we have obſerved a thouſand and a thouſand times; and when any new inſtance of this nature is preſented, we draw without heſitation the accuſtomed inference. The exact ſimilarity of the caſes gives us a perfect aſſurance of a ſimilar event; and a ſtronger evidence is never deſired nor ſought after. But wherever you depart in the leaſt from the ſimilarity of the caſes, you diminiſh proportionably the evidence; and may at laſt bring it to a very weak analogy, which is confeſſedly liable to error and uncertainty. After having experienced the circulation of the blood in human creatures, we make no doubt that it takes place in Titius and Mævius: but from its circulation in frogs and fiſhes, it is only a preſumption, though a ſtrong one, from analogy, that it takes place in men and other animals. The analogical reaſoning is much weaker, when we infer the circulation of the ſap in vegetables from our experience that the blood circulates in animals; and thoſe who haſtily followed that imperfect analogy, are found, by more accurate experiments, to have been miſtaken.

If we ſee a houſe, Cleanthes, we conclude, with the greateſt certainty, that it had an architect or builder; becauſe this is preciſely that ſpecies of effect which we have experienced to proceed from that ſpecies of cauſe. But ſurely you will not affirm, that the univerſe bears ſuch a reſemblance to a houſe, that we can with the ſame certainty infer a ſimilar cauſe, or that the analogy is here entire and perfect. The diſſimilitude is ſo ſtriking,

ſtriking, that the utmoſt you can here pretend to, is a gueſs, a conjecture, a preſumption concerning a ſimilar cauſe; and how that pretenſion will be received in the world, I leave you to conſider.

It would ſurely be very ill received, replied Cleanthes; and I ſhould be deſervedly blamed and deteſted, did I allow, that the proofs of a Deity amounted to no more than a gueſs or conjecture. But is the whole adjuſtment of means to ends, in a houſe, and in the univerſe, ſo ſlight a reſemblance? The œconomy of final cauſes? The order, proportion, and arrangement of every part? Steps of a ſtair are plainly contrived, that human legs may uſe them in mounting; and this inference is certain and infallible. Human legs are alſo contrived for walking and mounting; and this inference, I allow, is not altogether ſo certain, becauſe of the diſſimilarity which you remark; but does it, therefore, deſerve the name only of preſumption or conjecture?

Good God! cried Demea, interrupting him, where are we? Zealous defenders of religion allow, that the proofs of a Deity fall ſhort of perfect evidence! And you, Philo, on whoſe aſſiſtance I depended in proving the adorable myſterioufneſs of the Divine Nature, do you aſſent to all theſe extravagant opinions of Cleanthes? For what other name can I give them? Or why ſpare my cenſure, when ſuch principles are advanced, ſupported by ſuch an authority, before ſo young a man as Pamphilus?

You ſeem not to apprehend, replied Philo, that I argue with Cleanthes in his own way; and, by ſhowing him the dangerous conſequences of his tenets, hope at laſt to reduce him to our opinion. But what ſticks moſt with you, I obſerve, is the repreſentation which

which Cleanthes has made of the argument *à poſteriori*; and finding that that argument is likely to eſcape your hold, and vaniſh into air, you think it ſo diſguiſed, that you can ſcarcely believe it to be ſet in its true light. Now, however much I may diſſent, in other reſpects, from the dangerous principles of Cleanthes, I muſt allow, that he has fairly repreſented that argument; and I ſhall endeavour ſo to ſtate the matter to you, that you will entertain no farther ſcruples with regard to it.

Were a man to abſtract from every thing which he knows or has ſeen, he would be altogether incapable, merely from his own ideas, to determine what kind of ſcene the univerſe muſt be, or to give the preference to one ſtate or ſituation of things above another. For as nothing which he clearly conceives could be eſteemed impoſſible, or implying a contradiction, every chimera of his fancy would be upon an equal footing; nor could he aſſign any juſt reaſon, why he adheres to one idea or ſyſtem, and rejects the others which are equally poſſible.

Again; after he opens his eyes, and contemplates the world as it really is, it would be impoſſible for him, at firſt, to aſſign the cauſe of any one event, much leſs of the whole of things, or of the univerſe. He might ſet his Fancy a rambling; and ſhe might bring him in an infinite variety of reports and repreſentations. Theſe would all be poſſible; but being all equally poſſible, he would never, of himſelf, give a ſatisfactory account for his preferring one of them to the reſt. Experience alone can point out to him the true cauſe of any phenomenon.

Now, according to this method of reaſoning, Demea, it follows (and is, indeed, tacitly allowed by Cleanthes

Cleanthes himſelf), that order, arrangement, or the adjuſtment of final cauſes, is not, of itſelf, any proof of deſign; but only ſo far as it has been experienced to proceed from that principle. For aught we can know *à priori*, matter may contain the ſource or ſpring of order originally within itſelf, as well as mind does; and there is no more difficulty in conceiving, that the ſeveral elements, from an internal unknown cauſe, may fall into the moſt exquiſite arrangement, than to conceive that their ideas, in the great, univerſal mind, from a like internal unknown cauſe, fall into that arrangement. The equal poſſibility of both theſe ſuppoſitions is allowed. But by experience we find, (according to Cleanthes), that there is a difference between them. Throw ſeveral pieces of ſteel together, without ſhape or form; they will never arrange themſelves ſo as to compoſe a watch. Stone, and mortar, and wood, without an architect, never erect a houſe. But the ideas in a human mind, we ſee, by an unknown, inexplicable œconomy, arrange themſelves ſo as to form the plan of a watch or houſe. Experience, therefore, proves, that there is an original principle of order in mind, not in matter. From ſimilar effects we infer ſimilar cauſes. The adjuſtment of means to ends is alike in the univerſe, as in a machine of human contrivance. The cauſes, therefore, muſt be reſembling.

I was from the beginning ſcandalized, I muſt own, with this reſemblance, which is aſſerted, between the Deity and human creatures; and muſt conceive it to imply ſuch a degradation of the Supreme Being as no ſound Theiſt could endure. With your aſſiſtance, therefore, Demea, I ſhall endeavour to defend what you juſtly call the adorable myſterioufneſs of the Divine

vine Nature, and ſhall refute this reaſoning of Cleanthes; provided he allows that I have made a fair repreſentation of it.

When Cleanthes had aſſented, Philo, after a ſhort pauſe, proceeded in the following manner.

That all inferences, Cleanthes, concerning fact, are founded on experience; and that all experimental reaſonings are founded on the ſuppoſition, that ſimilar cauſes prove ſimilar effects, and ſimilar effects ſimilar cauſes; I ſhall not, at preſent, much diſpute with you. But obſerve, I entreat you, with what extreme caution all juſt reaſoners proceed in the transferring of experiments to ſimilar caſes. Unleſs the caſes be exactly ſimilar, they repoſe no perfect confidence in applying their paſt obſervation to any particular phenomenon. Every alteration of circumſtances occaſions a doubt concerning the event; and it requires new experiments to prove certainly, that the new circumſtances are of no moment or importance. A change in bulk, ſituation, arrangement, age, diſpoſition of the air, or ſurrounding bodies; any of theſe particulars may be attended with the moſt unexpected conſequences: And unleſs the objects be quite familiar to us, it is the higheſt temerity to expect with aſſurance, after any of theſe changes, an event ſimilar to that which before fell under our obſervation. The ſlow and deliberate ſteps of philoſophers, here, if any where, are diſtinguiſhed from the precipitate march of the vulgar, who, hurried on by the ſmalleſt ſimilitude, are incapable of all diſcernment or conſideration.

But can you think, Cleanthes, that your uſual phlegm and philoſophy have been preſerved in ſo wide a ſtep as you have taken, when you compared to the univerſe, houſes, ſhips, furniture, machines; and, from

their ſimilarity in ſome circumſtances, inferred a ſimilarity in their cauſes? Thought, deſign, intelligence, ſuch as we diſcover in men and other animals, is no more than one of the ſprings and principles of the univerſe, as well as heat or cold, attraction or repulſion, and a hundred others, which fall under daily obſervation. * It is an active cauſe, by which ſome particular parts of nature, we find, produce alterations on other parts. But can a concluſion, with any propriety, be transferred from parts to the whole? Does not the great diſproportion bar all compariſon and inference? From obſerving the growth of a hair, can we learn any thing concerning the generation of a man? Would the manner of a leaf's blowing, even though perfectly known, afford us any inſtruction concerning the vegetation of a tree?

But allowing that we were to take the operations of one part of nature upon another, for the foundation of our judgment concerning the origin of the whole, (which never can be admitted); yet why ſelect ſo minute, ſo weak, ſo bounded a principle as the reaſon and deſign of animals is found to be upon this planet? What peculiar privilege has this little agitation of the brain, which we call Thought, that we muſt thus make it the model of the whole univerſe? Our partiality in our own favour does indeed preſent it on all occaſions; but ſound philoſophy ought carefully to guard againſt ſo natural an illuſion.

So far from admitting, continued Philo, that the operations of a part can afford us any juſt concluſion concerning the origin of the whole, I will not allow any one part to form a rule for another part, if the latter be very remote from the former. Is there any reaſonable ground to conclude, that the inhabitants of other

other planets poſſeſs thought, intelligence, reaſon, or any thing ſimilar to theſe faculties in men? When nature has ſo extremely diverſified her manner of operation in this ſmall globe; can we imagine, that ſhe inceſſantly copies herſelf throughout ſo immenſe a univerſe? And if thought, as we may well ſuppoſe, be confined merely to this narrow corner, and has even there ſo limited a ſphere of action; with what propriety can we aſſign it for the original cauſe of all things? The narrow views of a peaſant, who makes his domeſtic œconomy the rule for the government of kingdoms, is in compariſon a pardonable ſophiſm.

But were we ever ſo much aſſured, that a thought and reaſon, reſembling the human, were to be found throughout the whole univerſe, and were its activity elſewhere vaſtly greater and more commanding than it appears in this globe; yet I cannot ſee, why the operations of a world, conſtituted, arranged, adjuſted, can with any propriety be extended to a world which is in its embryo ſtate, and is advancing towards that conſtitution and arrangement. By obſervation, we know ſomewhat of the œconomy, action, and nouriſhment of a finiſhed animal; but we muſt transfer with great caution that obſervation to the growth of a fœtus in the womb, and ſtill more to the formation of an animalcule in the loins of its male parent. Nature, we find, even from our limited experience, poſſeſſes an infinite number of ſprings and principles, which inceſſantly diſcover themſelves on every change of her poſition and ſituation. And what new and unknown principles would actuate her in ſo new and unknown a ſituation as that of the formation of a univerſe, we cannot, without the utmoſt temerity, pretend to determine.

A very ſmall part of this great ſyſtem, during a very ſhort time, is very imperfectly diſcovered to us; and do we thence pronounce deciſively concerning the origin of the whole?

Admirable concluſion! Stone, wood, brick, iron, braſs, have not, at this time, in this minute globe of earth, an order or arrangement without human art and contrivance: therefore the univerſe could not originally attain its order and arrangement without ſomething ſimilar to human art. But is a part of nature, a rule for another part very wide of the former? Is it a rule for the whole? Is a very ſmall part a rule for the univerſe? Is nature in one ſituation a certain rule for nature in another ſituation vaſtly different from the former?

And can you blame me, Cleanthes, if I here imitate the prudent reſerve of Simonides, who, according to the noted ſtory, being aſked by Hiero, "What God was?" deſired a day to think of it, and then two days more; and after that manner continually prolonged the term, without ever bringing in his definition or deſcription? Could you even blame me, if I had anſwered at firſt, "that I did not know," and was ſenſible that this ſubject lay vaſtly beyond the reach of my faculties? You might cry out ſceptic and rallier as much as you pleaſed: but having found, in ſo many other ſubjects much more familiar, the imperfections, and even contradictions of human reaſon, I never ſhould expect any ſucceſs, from its feeble conjectures, in a ſubject ſo ſublime, and ſo remote from the ſphere of our obſervation. When two ſpecies of objects have always been obſerved to be conjoined together, I can infer, by cuſtom, the exiſtence of one wherever I ſee the exiſtence of the other: and this I call an argument from experience.

rience. But how this argument can have place, where the objects, as in the preſent caſe, are ſingle, individual, without parallel, or ſpecific reſemblance, may be difficult to explain. And will any man tell me with a ſerious countenance, that an orderly univerſe muſt ariſe from ſome thought and art, like the human; becauſe we have experience of it? To aſcertain this reaſoning, it were requiſite, that we had experience of the origin of worlds; and it is not ſufficient, ſurely, that we have ſeen ſhips and cities ariſe from human art and contrivance.

Philo was proceeding in this vehement manner, ſomewhat between jeſt and earneſt, as it appeared to me; when he obſerved ſome ſigns of impatience in Cleanthes, and then immediately ſtopped ſhort. What I had to ſuggeſt, ſaid Cleanthes, is only that you would not abuſe terms, or make uſe of popular expreſſions to ſubvert philoſophical reaſonings. You know, that the vulgar often diſtinguiſh reaſon from experience, even where the queſtion relates only to matter of fact and exiſtence; though it is found, where that reaſon is properly analyzed, that it is nothing but a ſpecies of experience. To prove by experience the origin of the univerſe from mind, is not more contrary to common ſpeech, than to prove the motion of the earth from the ſame principle. And a caviller might raiſe all the ſame objections to the Copernican ſyſtem which you have urged againſt my reaſonings. Have you other earths, might he ſay, which you have ſeen to move? Have . . . . . .

Yes! cried Philo, interrupting him, we have other earths. Is not the moon another earth, which we ſee to turn round its centre? Is not Venus another earth, where we obſerve the ſame phenomenon?

Are not the revolutions of the ſun alſo a confirmation, from analogy, of the ſame theory? All the planets, are they not earths, which revolve about the ſun? Are not the ſatellites moons, which move round Jupiter and Saturn, and along with theſe primary planets round the ſun? Theſe analogies and reſemblances, with others which I have not mentioned, are the ſole proofs of the Copernican ſyſtem: and to you it belongs to conſider, whether you have any analogies of the ſame kind to ſupport your theory.

In reality, Cleanthes, continued he, the modern ſyſtem of aſtronomy is now ſo much received by all inquirers, and has become ſo eſſential a part even of our earlieſt education, that we are not commonly very ſcrupulous in examining the reaſons upon which it is founded. It is now become a matter of mere curioſity to ſtudy the firſt writers on that ſubject, who had the full force of prejudice to encounter, and were obliged to turn their arguments on every ſide, in order to render them popular and convincing. But if we peruſe Galilæo's famous Dialogues concerning the ſyſtem of the world, we ſhall find, that that great genius, one of the ſublimeſt that ever exiſted, firſt bent all his endeavours to prove, that there was no foundation for the diſtinction commonly made between elementary and celeſtial ſubſtances. The ſchools, proceeding from the illuſions of ſenſe, had carried this diſtinction very far; and had eſtabliſhed the latter ſubſtances to be ingenerable, incorruptible, unalterable, impaſſible; and had aſſigned all the oppoſite qualities to the former. But Galilæo, beginning with the moon, proved its ſimilarity in every particular to the earth; its convex figure, its natural darkneſs when not illuminated, its denſity, its diſtinction into ſolid and liquid, the variations

ations of its phaſes, the mutual illuminations of the earth and moon, their mutual eclipſes, the inequalities of the lunar ſurface, &c. After many inſtances of this kind, with regard to all the planets, men plainly ſaw that theſe bodies became proper objects of experience; and that the ſimilarity of their nature enabled us to extend the ſame arguments and phenomena from one to the other.

In this cautious proceeding of the aſtronomers, you may read your own condemnation, Cleanthes; or rather may ſee, that the ſubject in which you are engaged exceeds all human reaſon and inquiry. Can you pretend to ſhow any ſuch ſimilarity between the fabric of a houſe and the generation of a univerſe? Have you ever ſeen Nature in any ſuch ſituation as reſembles the firſt arrangement of the elements? Have worlds ever been formed under your eye? and have you had leiſure to obſerve the whole progreſs of the phenomenon, from the firſt appearance of order to its final conſummation? If you have, then cite your experience, and deliver your theory.

PART III.

HOW the moſt abſurd argument, replied Cleanthes, in the hands of a man of ingenuity and invention, may acquire an air of probability! Are you not aware, Philo, that it became neceſſary for Copernicus and his firſt diſciples, to prove the ſimilarity of the terreſtrial and celeſtial matter; becauſe ſeveral

philoſophers, blinded by old ſyſtems, and ſupported by ſome ſenſible appearances, had denied this ſimilarity? but that it is by no means neceſſary, that Theiſts ſhould prove the ſimilarity of the works of Nature to thoſe of art; becauſe this ſimilarity is ſelf-evident and undeniable? The ſame matter, a like form: what more is requiſite to ſhow an analogy between their cauſes, and to aſcertain the origin of all things from a divine purpoſe and intention? Your objections, I muſt freely tell you, are no better than the abſtruſe cavils of thoſe philoſophers who denied motion; and ought to be refuted in the ſame manner, by illuſtrations, examples, and inſtances, rather than by ſerious argument and philoſophy.

Suppoſe, therefore, that an articulate voice were heard in the clouds, much louder and more melodious than any which human art could ever reach: Suppoſe, that this voice were extended in the ſame inſtant over all nations, and ſpoke to each nation in its own language and dialect: Suppoſe, that the words delivered not only contain a juſt ſenſe and meaning, but convey ſome inſtruction altogether worthy of a benevolent Being, ſuperior to mankind: Could you poſſibly heſitate a moment concerning the cauſe of this voice? and muſt you not inſtantly aſcribe it to ſome deſign or purpoſe? Yet I cannot ſee but all the ſame objections (if they merit that appellation) which lie againſt the ſyſtem of Theiſm, may alſo be produced againſt this inference.

Might you not ſay, that all concluſions concerning fact were founded on experience; that when we hear an articulate voice in the dark, and thence infer a man, it is only the reſemblance of the effects which leads us to conclude that there is a like reſemblance in the cauſe:

cauſe: but that this extraordinary voice, by its loudneſs, extent, and flexibility to all languages, bears ſo little analogy to any human voice, that we have no reaſon to ſuppoſe any analogy in their cauſes: and conſequently, that a rational, wiſe, coherent ſpeech, proceeded, you knew not whence, from ſome accidental whiſtling of the winds, not from any divine reaſon or intelligence? You ſee clearly your own objections in theſe cavils; and I hope too, you ſee clearly, that they cannot poſſibly have more force in the one caſe than in the other.

But to bring the caſe ſtill nearer the preſent one of the univerſe, I ſhall make two ſuppoſitions, which imply not any abſurdity or impoſſibility. Suppoſe, that there is a natural, univerſal, invariable language, common to every individual of human race; and that books are natural productions, which perpetuate themſelves in the ſame manner with animals and vegetables, by deſcent and propagation. Several expreſſions of our paſſions contain a univerſal language; all brute animals have a natural ſpeech, which, however limited, is very intelligible to their own ſpecies. And as there are infinitely fewer parts and leſs contrivance in the fineſt compoſition of eloquence, than in the coarſeſt organized body, the propagation of an Iliad or Æneid is an eaſier ſuppoſition than that of any plant or animal.

Suppoſe, therefore, that you enter into your library, thus peopled by natural volumes, containing the moſt refined reaſon and moſt exquiſite beauty; could you poſſibly open one of them, and doubt that its original cauſe bore the ſtrongeſt analogy to mind and intelligence? When it reaſons and diſcourſes; when it expoſtulates, argues, and enforces its views and topics;

pics; when it applies ſometimes to the pure intellect, ſometimes to the affections; when it collects, diſpoſes, and adorns every conſideration ſuited to the ſubject; could you perſiſt in aſſerting, that all this, at the bottom, had really no meaning; and that the firſt formation of this volume in the loins of its original parent proceeded not from thought and deſign? Your obſtinacy, I know, reaches not that degree of firmneſs: even your ſceptical play and wantonneſs would be abaſhed at ſo glaring an abſurdity.

But if there be any difference, Philo, between this ſuppoſed caſe and the real one of the univerſe, it is all to the advantage of the latter. The anatomy of an animal affords many ſtronger inſtances of deſign than the peruſal of Livy or Tacitus: and any objection which you ſtart in the former caſe, by carrying me back to ſo unuſual and extraordinary a ſcene as the firſt formation of worlds, the ſame objection has place on the ſuppoſition of our vegetating library. Chooſe, then, your party, Philo, without ambiguity or evaſion: aſſert either that a rational volume is no proof of a rational cauſe, or admit of a ſimilar cauſe to all the works of nature.

Let me here obſerve too, continued Cleanthes, that this religious argument, inſtead of being weakened by that ſcepticiſm ſo much affected by you, rather acquires force from it, and becomes more firm and undiſputed. To exclude all argument or reaſoning of every kind, is either affectation or madneſs. The declared profeſſion of every reaſonable ſceptic is only to reject abſtruſe, remote, and refined arguments; to adhere to common ſenſe and the plain inſtincts of nature; and to aſſent, wherever any reaſons ſtrike him with ſo full a force, that he cannot, without the greateſt violence, prevent

prevent it. Now the arguments for Natural Religion are plainly of this kind; and nothing but the moſt perverſe, obſtinate metaphyſics can reject them. Conſider, anatomize the eye; ſurvey its ſtructure and contrivance; and tell me, from your own feeling, if the idea of a contriver does not immediately flow in upon you with a force like that of ſenſation. The moſt obvious concluſion, ſurely, is in favour of deſign; and it requires time, reflection, and ſtudy, to ſummon up thoſe frivolous, though abſtruſe objections, which can ſupport Infidelity. Who can behold the male and female of each ſpecies, the correſpondence of their parts and inſtincts, their paſſions, and whole courſe of life before and after generation, but muſt be ſenſible, that the propagation of the ſpecies is intended by Nature? Millions and millions of ſuch inſtances preſent themſelves through every part of the univerſe; and no language can convey a more intelligible, irreſiſtible meaning, than the curious adjuſtment of final cauſes. To what degree, therefore, of blind dogmatiſm muſt one have attained, to reject ſuch natural and ſuch convincing arguments?

Some beauties in writing we may meet with, which ſeem contrary to rules, and which gain the affections, and animate the imagination, in oppoſition to all the precepts of criticiſm, and to the authority of the eſtabliſhed maſters of art. And if the argument for Theiſm be, as you pretend, contradictory to the principles of logic; its univerſal, its irreſiſtible influence proves clearly, that there may be arguments of a like irregular nature. Whatever cavils may be urged, an orderly world, as well as a coherent, articulate ſpeech, will ſtill be received as an inconteſtible proof of deſign and intention.

It

It ſometimes happens, I own, that the religious arguments have not their due influence on an ignorant ſavage and barbarian; not becauſe they are obſcure and difficult, but becauſe he never aſks himſelf any queſtion with regard to them. Whence ariſes the curious ſtructure of an animal? From the copulation of its parents. And theſe whence? From their parents. A few removes ſet the objects at ſuch a diſtance, that to him they are loſt in darkneſs and confuſion; nor is he actuated by any curioſity to trace them farther. But this is neither dogmatiſm nor ſcepticiſm, but ſtupidity; a ſtate of mind very different from your ſifting, inquiſitive diſpoſition, my ingenious friend. You can trace cauſes from effects; you can compare the moſt diſtant and remote objects; and your greateſt errors proceed not from barrenneſs of thought and invention, but from too luxuriant a fertility, which ſuppreſſes your natural good ſenſe, by a profuſion of unneceſſary ſcruples and objections.

Here I could obſerve, Hermippus, that Philo was a little embarraſſed and confounded: but while he heſitated in delivering an anſwer, luckily for him Demea broke in upon the diſcourſe, and ſaved his countenance.

Your inſtance, Cleanthes, ſaid he, drawn from books and language, being familiar, has, I confeſs, ſo much more force on that account: but is there not ſome danger too in this very circumſtance; and may it not render us preſumptuous, by making us imagine we comprehend the Deity, and have ſome adequate idea of his nature and attributes? When I read a volume, I enter into the mind and intention of the author: I become him, in a manner, for the inſtant; and have an immediate feeling and conception of thoſe ideas which revolved in his imagination, while employed in that

that compoſition. But ſo near an approach we never ſurely can make to the Deity. His ways are not our ways. His attributes are perfect, but incomprehenſible. And this volume of Nature contains a great and inexplicable riddle, more than any intelligible diſcourſe or reaſoning.

The ancient Platoniſts, you know, were the moſt religious and devout of all the Pagan philoſophers: yet many of them, particularly Plotinus, expreſsly declare, that intellect or underſtanding is not to be aſcribed to the Deity; and that our moſt perfect worſhip of him conſiſts, not in acts of veneration, reverence, gratitude, or love; but in a certain myſterious ſelf-annihilation, or total extinction of all our faculties. Theſe ideas are, perhaps, too far ſtretched; but ſtill it muſt be acknowledged, that, by repreſenting the Deity as ſo intelligible and comprehenſible, and ſo ſimilar to a human mind, we are guilty of the groſſeſt and moſt narrow partiality, and make ourſelves the model of the whole univerſe.

All the ſentiments of the human mind, gratitude, reſentment, love, friendſhip, approbation, blame, pity, emulation, envy, have a plain reference to the ſtate and ſituation of man, and are calculated for preſerving the exiſtence, and promoting the activity, of ſuch a being in ſuch circumſtances. It ſeems therefore unreaſonable to transfer ſuch ſentiments to a ſupreme exiſtence, or to ſuppoſe him actuated by them; and the phænomena, beſides, of the univerſe will not ſupport us in ſuch a theory. All our ideas derived from the ſenſes, are confeſſedly falſe and illuſive; and cannot, therefore, be ſuppoſed to have place in a ſupreme intelligence: And as the ideas of internal ſentiment, added to thoſe of the external ſenſes, compoſe the whole furniture

furniture of human understanding, we may conclude, that none of the materials of thought are in any reſpect ſimilar in the human and in the divine intelligence. Now, as to the manner of thinking; how can we make any compariſon between them, or ſuppoſe them anywiſe reſembling? Our thought is fluctuating, uncertain, fleeting, ſucceſſive, and compounded; and were we to remove theſe circumſtances, we abſolutely annihilate its eſſence; and it would, in ſuch a caſe, be an abuſe of terms, to apply to it the name of thought or reaſon. At leaſt, if it appear more pious and reſpectful (as it really is) ſtill to retain theſe terms, when we mention the Supreme Being; we ought to acknowledge, that their meaning, in that caſe, is totally incomprehenſible; and that the infirmities of our nature do not permit us to reach any ideas which in the leaſt correſpond to the ineffable ſublimity of the divine attributes.

PART IV.

IT ſeems ſtrange to me, ſaid Cleanthes, that you, Demea, who are ſo ſincere in the cauſe of religion, ſhould ſtill maintain the myſterious, incomprehenſible nature of the Deity, and ſhould inſiſt ſo ſtrenuouſly that he has no manner of likeneſs or reſemblance to human creatures. The Deity, I can readily allow, poſſeſſes many powers and attributes, of which we can have no comprehenſion: But if our ideas, ſo far as they

they go, be not juſt, and adequate, and correſpondent to his real nature, I know not what there is in this ſubject worth inſiſting on. Is the name, without any meaning, of ſuch mighty importance? Or how do you, Myſtics, who maintain the abſolute incomprehenſibility of the Deity, differ from Sceptics or Atheiſts, who aſſert, that the firſt cauſe of all is unknown and unintelligible? Their temerity muſt be very great, if, after rejecting the production by a mind; I mean, a mind reſembling the human (for I know of no other), they pretend to aſſign, with certainty, any other ſpecific intelligible cauſe: and their conſcience muſt be very ſcrupulous indeed, if they refuſe to call the univerſal, unknown cauſe, a God or Deity, and to beſtow on him as many ſublime eulogies and unmeaning epithets as you ſhall pleaſe to require of them.

Who could imagine, replied Demea, that Cleanthes, the calm, philoſophical Cleanthes, would attempt to refute his antagoniſts, by affixing a nick-name to them; and, like the common bigots and inquiſitors of the age, have recourſe to invective and declamation, inſtead of reaſoning? Or does he not perceive, that theſe topics are eaſily retorted, and that Anthropomorphite is an appellation as invidious, and implies as dangerous conſequences, as the epithet of Myſtic, with which he has honoured us? In reality, Cleanthes, conſider what it is you aſſert, when you repreſent the Deity as ſimilar to a human mind and underſtanding. What is the ſoul of man? A compoſition of various faculties, paſſions, ſentiments, ideas; united, indeed, into one ſelf or perſon, but ſtill diſtinct from each other. When it reaſons, the ideas, which are the parts of its diſcourſe, arrange themſelves in a certain form or order; which is not preſerved entire for a moment, but immediately gives

gives place to another arrangement. New opinions, new paſſions, new affections, new feelings ariſe, which continually diverſify the mental ſcene, and produce in it the greateſt variety and moſt rapid ſucceſſion imaginable. How is this compatible with that perfect immutability and ſimplicity which all true Theiſts aſcribe to the Deity? By the ſame act, ſay they, he ſees paſt, preſent, and future: His love and hatred, his mercy and juſtice, are one individual operation: He is entire in every point of ſpace; and complete in every inſtant of duration. No ſucceſſion, no change, no acquiſition, no diminution. What he is, implies not in it any ſhadow of diſtinction or diverſity. And what he is, this moment, he ever has been, and ever will be, without any new judgment, ſentiment, or operation. He ſtands fixed in one ſimple, perfect ſtate: nor can you ever ſay, with any propriety, that this act of his is different from that other; or that this judgment or idea has been lately formed, and will give place, by ſucceſſion, to any different judgment or idea.

I can readily allow, ſaid Cleanthes, that thoſe who maintain the perfect ſimplicity of the Supreme Being, to the extent in which you have explained it, are complete Myſtics, and chargeable with all the conſequences which I have drawn from their opinion. They are, in a word, Atheiſts, without knowing it. For though it be allowed, that the Deity poſſeſſes attributes of which we have no comprehenſion; yet ought we never to aſcribe to him any attributes which are abſolutely incompatible with that intelligent nature eſſential to him. A mind, whoſe acts, and ſentiments, and ideas, are not diſtinct and ſucceſſive; one, that is wholly ſimple, and totally immutable; is a mind, which has no thought, no reaſon, no will, no ſentiment, no love, no hatred;

or,

or, in a word, is no mind at all. It is an abuſe of terms to give it that appellation; and we may as well ſpeak of limited extenſion without figure, or of number without compoſition.

Pray conſider, ſaid Philo, whom you are at preſent inveighing againſt. You are honouring with the appellation of Atheiſt all the ſound, orthodox divines, almoſt, who have treated of this ſubject; and you will at laſt be, yourſelf, found, according to your reckoning, the only ſound Theiſt in the world. But if idolaters be Atheiſts, as, I think, may juſtly be aſſerted, and Chriſtian Theologians the ſame; what becomes of the argument, ſo much celebrated, derived from the univerſal conſent of mankind?

But becauſe I know you are not much ſwayed by names and authorities, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew you, a little more diſtinctly, the inconveniences of that Anthropomorphiſm which you have embraced; and ſhall prove, that there is no ground to ſuppoſe a plan of the world to be formed in the divine mind, conſiſting of diſtinct ideas, differently arranged; in the ſame manner as an architect forms in his head the plan of a houſe which he intends to execute.

It is not eaſy, I own, to ſee what is gained by this ſuppoſition, whether we judge of the matter by Reaſon or by Experience. We are ſtill obliged to mount higher, in order to find the cauſe of this cauſe, which you had aſſigned as ſatisfactory and concluſive.

If Reaſon (I mean abſtract reaſon, derived from inquiries *a priori*) be not alike mute with regard to all queſtions concerning cauſe and effect; this ſentence at leaſt it will venture to pronounce, That a mental world, or univerſe of ideas, requires a cauſe as much as does a material world, or univerſe of objects; and,

if ſimilar in its arrangement, muſt require a ſimilar cauſe. For what is there in this ſubject which ſhould occaſion a different concluſion or inference? In an abſtract view, they are entirely alike; and no difficulty attends the one ſuppoſition, which is not common to both of them.

Again, when we will needs force Experience to pronounce ſome ſentence, even on theſe ſubjects which lie beyond her ſphere, neither can ſhe perceive any material difference, in this particular, between theſe two kinds of worlds; but finds them to be governed by ſimilar principles, and to depend upon an equal variety of cauſes in their operations: We have ſpecimens in miniature of both of them. Our own mind reſembles the one: A vegetable or animal body the other. Let Experience, therefore, judge from theſe ſamples. Nothing ſeems more delicate, with regard to its cauſes, than thought; and as theſe cauſes never operate in two perſons after the ſame manner, ſo we never find two perſons who think exactly alike. Nor indeed does the ſame perſon think exactly alike at any two different periods of time. A difference of age, of the diſpoſition of his body, of weather, of food, of company, of books, of paſſions; any of theſe particulars, or others more minute, are ſufficient to alter the curious machinery of thought, and communicate to it very different movements and operations. As far as we can judge, vegetables and animal bodies are not more delicate in their motions, nor depend upon a greater variety, or more curious adjuſtment of ſprings and principles.

How, therefore, ſhall we ſatisfy ourſelves concerning the cauſe of that Being, whom you ſuppoſe the Author of Nature, or, according to your ſyſtem of Anthropomorphiſm,

morphiſm, the ideal world, into which you trace the material? Have we not the ſame reaſon to trace that ideal world into another ideal world, or new intelligent principle? But if we ſtop, and go no farther; why go ſo far? Why not ſtop at the material world? How can we ſatisfy ourſelves, without going on *in infinitum?* And after all, what ſatisfaction is there in that infinite progreſſion? Let us remember the ſtory of the Indian philoſopher and his elephant. It was never more applicable than to the preſent ſubject. If the material world reſts upon a ſimilar ideal world, this ideal world muſt reſt upon ſome other; and ſo on without end. It were better, therefore, never to look beyond the preſent material world. By ſuppoſing it to contain the principle of its order within itſelf, we really aſſert it to be God; and the ſooner we arrive at that divine Being, ſo much the better. When you go one ſtep beyond the mundane ſyſtem, you only excite an inquiſitive humour, which it is impoſſible ever to ſatisfy.

To ſay, that the different ideas, which compoſe the reaſon of the Supreme Being, fall into order, of themſelves, and by their own nature, is really to talk without any preciſe meaning. If it has a meaning, I would fain know, why is it not as good ſenſe to ſay, that the parts of the material world would fall into order, of themſelves, and by their own nature. Can the one opinion be intelligible, while the other is not ſo?

We have, indeed, experience of ideas, which fall into order, of themſelves, and without any known cauſe: But, I am ſure, we have a much larger experience of matter, which does the ſame; as in all inſtances of generation and vegetation, where the accurate analyſis of the cauſe exceeds all human comprehenſion. We have alſo experience of particular ſyſtems of

thought and of matter, which have no order: of the firſt, in madneſs; of the ſecond, in corruption. Why then ſhould we think, that order is more eſſential to one than the other? And if it requires a cauſe in both, what do we gain by your ſyſtem, in tracing the univerſe of objects into a ſimilar univerſe of ideas? The firſt ſtep which we make leads us on for ever. It were, therefore, wiſe in us, to limit all our inquiries to the preſent world, without looking farther. No ſatisfaction can ever be attained by theſe ſpeculations, which ſo far exceed the narrow bounds of human underſtanding.

It was uſual with the Peripatetics, you know, Cleanthes, when the cauſe of any phenomenon was demanded, to have recourſe to their faculties, or occult qualities; and to ſay, for inſtance, that bread nouriſhed by its nutritive faculty, and ſenna purged by its purgative: But it has been diſcovered, that this ſubterfuge was nothing but the diſguiſe of ignorance; and that theſe philoſophers, though leſs ingenuous, really ſaid the ſame thing with the ſceptics or the vulgar, who fairly confeſſed, that they knew not the cauſe of theſe phænomena. In like manner, when it is aſked, what cauſe produces order in the ideas of the Supreme Being? can any other reaſon be aſſigned by you, Anthropomorphites, than that it is a rational faculty, and that ſuch is the nature of the Deity? But why a ſimilar anſwer will not be equally ſatisfactory in accounting for the order of the world, without having recourſe to any ſuch intelligent creator as you inſiſt on, may be difficult to determine. It is only to ſay, that ſuch is the nature of material objects, and that they are all originally poſſeſſed of a faculty of order and proportion. Theſe are only more learned and elaborate ways

of

of confeſſing our ignorance; nor has the one hypotheſis any real advantage above the other, except in its greater conformity to vulgar prejudices.

You have diſplayed this argument with great emphaſis, replied Cleanthes: You ſeem not ſenſible how eaſy it is to anſwer it. Even in common life, if I aſſign a cauſe for any event; is it any objection, Philo, that I cannot aſſign the cauſe of that cauſe, and anſwer every new queſtion which may inceſſantly be ſtarted? And what philoſophers could poſſibly ſubmit to ſo rigid a rule? philoſophers, who confeſs ultimate cauſes to be totally unknown; and are ſenſible, that the moſt refined principles, into which they trace the phenomena, are ſtill to them as inexplicable as theſe phenomena themſelves are to the vulgar. The order and arrangement of nature, the curious adjuſtment of final cauſes, the plain uſe and intention of every part and organ; all theſe beſpeak, in the cleareſt language, an intelligent cauſe or author. The heavens and the earth join in the ſame teſtimony: The whole chorus of Nature raiſes one hymn to the praiſes of its Creator: You alone, or almoſt alone, diſturb this general harmony. You ſtart abſtruſe doubts, cavils, and objections: You aſk me, what is the cauſe of this cauſe? I know not; I care not; that concerns not me. I have found a Deity; and here I ſtop my inquiry. Let thoſe go farther who are wiſer or more enterprizing.

I pretend to be neither, replied Philo: and for that very reaſon, I ſhould never perhaps have attempted to go ſo far; eſpecially when I am ſenſible, that I muſt at laſt be contented to ſit down with the ſame anſwer, which, without farther trouble, might have ſatisfied me from the beginning. If I am ſtill to remain in utter ignorance of cauſes, and can abſolutely give an ex-

plication of nothing, I ſhall never eſteem it any advantage to ſhove off for a moment a difficulty, which, you acknowledge, muſt immediately, in its full force, recur upon me. Naturaliſts indeed very juſtly explain particular effects by more general cauſes; though theſe general cauſes themſelves ſhould remain in the end totally inexplicable: but they never ſurely thought it ſatisfactory to explain a particular effect by a particular cauſe, which was no more to be accounted for than the effect itſelf. An ideal ſyſtem, arranged of itſelf, without a precedent deſign, is not a whit more explicable than a material one, which attains its order in a like manner; nor is there any more difficulty in the latter ſuppoſition than in the former.

PART V.

BUT to ſhow you ſtill more inconveniences, continued Philo, in your Anthropomorphiſm; pleaſe to take a new ſurvey of your principles. "Like effects prove like cauſes." This is the experimental argument; and this, you ſay too, is the ſole theological argument. Now it is certain, that the liker the effects are which are ſeen, and the liker the cauſes which are inferred, the ſtronger is the argument. Every departure on either ſide diminiſhes the probability, and renders the experiment leſs concluſive. You cannot doubt of the principle: neither ought you to reject its conſequences.

All

All the new diſcoveries in aſtronomy, which prove the immenſe grandeur and magnificence of the works of Nature, are ſo many additional arguments for a Deity, according to the true ſyſtem of Theiſm: but, according to your hypotheſis of experimental Theiſm, they become ſo many objections, by removing the effect ſtill farther from all reſemblance to the effects of human art and contrivance. For if Lucretius *, even following the old ſyſtem of the world, could exclaim,

> Quis regere immenſi ſummam, quis habere profundi
> Indu manu validas potis eſt moderanter habenas?
> Quis pariter cœlos omnes convertere? et omnes
> Ignibus ætheriis terras ſuffire feraces?
> Omnibus inque locis eſſe omni tempore præſto?

If Tully † eſteemed this reaſoning ſo natural as to put it into the mouth of his Epicurean, *Quibus enim oculis animi intueri potuit veſter Plato fabricam illam tanti operis, qua conſtrui a Deo atque ædificari mundum facit? quæ molitio? quæ ferramenta? qui vectes? quæ machinæ? qui miniſtri tanti muneris fuerunt? quemadmodum autem obedire et parere voluntati architecti aer, ignis, aqua, terra potuerunt?* If this argument, I ſay, had any force in former ages, how much greater muſt it have at preſent, when the bounds of Nature are ſo infinitely enlarged, and ſuch a magnificent ſcene is opened to us? It is ſtill more unreaſonable to form our idea of ſo unlimited a cauſe from our experience of the narrow productions of human deſign and invention.

The diſcoveries by microſcopes, as they open a new univerſe in miniature, are ſtill objections, according to you; arguments, according to me. The farther

* Lib. xi. 1094. † De nat. Deor. lib. i.

we puſh our reſearches of this kind, we are ſtill led to infer the univerſal cauſe of all to be vaſtly different from mankind, or from any object of human experience and obſervation.

And what ſay you to the diſcoveries in anatomy, chemiſtry, botany?——Theſe ſurely are no objections, replied Cleanthes: they only diſcover new inſtances of art and contrivance. It is ſtill the image of mind reflected on us from innumerable objects. Add a mind like the human, ſaid Philo. I know of no other, replied Cleanthes. And the liker the better, inſiſted Philo. To be ſure, ſaid Cleanthes.

Now, Cleanthes, ſaid Philo, with an air of alacrity and triumph, mark the conſequences. Firſt, By this method of reaſoning, you renounce all claim to infinity in any of the attributes of the Deity. For as the cauſe ought only to be proportioned to the effect; and the effect, ſo far as it falls under our cogniſance, is not infinite; what pretenſions have we, upon your ſuppoſitions, to aſcribe that attribute to the Divine Being? You will ſtill inſiſt, that, by removing him ſo much from all ſimilarity to human creatures, we give into the moſt arbitrary hypotheſis, and at the ſame time weaken all proofs of his exiſtence.

Secondly, You have no reaſon, on your theory, for aſcribing perfection to the Deity, even in his finite capacity; or for ſuppoſing him free from every error, miſtake, or incoherence, in his undertakings. There are many inexplicable difficulties in the works of Nature, which, if we allow a perfect author to be proved *a priori*, are eaſily ſolved, and become only ſeeming difficulties, from the narrow capacity of man, who cannot trace infinite relations. But, according to your method of reaſoning, theſe difficulties become all real; and

and perhaps will be inſiſted on, as new inſtances of likeneſs to human art and contrivance. At leaſt, you muſt acknowledge, that it is impoſſible for us to tell, from our limited views, whether this ſyſtem contains any great faults, or deſerves any conſiderable praiſe, if compared to other poſſible, and even real ſyſtems. Could a peaſant, if the Æneid were read to him, pronounce that poem to be abſolutely faultleſs, or even aſſign to it its proper rank among the productions of human wit; he, who had never ſeen any other production?

But were this world ever ſo perfect a production, it muſt ſtill remain uncertain, whether all the excellencies of the work can juſtly be aſcribed to the workman. If we ſurvey a ſhip, what an exalted idea muſt we form of the ingenuity of the carpenter who framed ſo complicated, uſeful, and beautiful a machine? And what ſurpriſe muſt we feel, when we find him a ſtupid mechanic, who imitated others, and copied an art, which, through a long ſucceſſion of ages, after multiplied trials, miſtakes, corrections, deliberations, and controverſies, had been gradually improving? Many worlds might have been botched and bungled, throughout an eternity, ere this ſyſtem was ſtruck out; much labour loſt; many fruitleſs trials made; and a ſlow, but continued, improvement carried on during infinite ages in the art of world-making. In ſuch ſubjects, who can determine where the truth, nay, who can conjecture, where the probability, lies; amidſt a great number of hypotheſes which may be propoſed, and a ſtill greater number which may be imagined?

And what ſhadow of an argument, continued Philo, can you produce, from your hypotheſis, to prove the unity of the Deity? A great number of men join in

building a houſe or ſhip, in rearing a city, in framing a commonwealth: why may not ſeveral deities combine in contriving and framing a world? This is only ſo much greater ſimilarity to human affairs. By ſharing the work among ſeveral, we may ſo much farther limit the attributes of each, and get rid of that extenſive power and knowledge, which muſt be ſuppoſed in one deity, and which, according to you, can only ſerve to weaken the proof of his exiſtence. And if ſuch fooliſh, ſuch vicious, creatures as man, can yet often unite in framing and executing one plan; how much more thoſe deities or dæmons, whom we may ſuppoſe ſeveral degrees more perfect?

To multiply cauſes without neceſſity, is indeed contrary to true philoſophy: but this principle applies not to the preſent caſe. Were one deity antecedently proved by your theory, who were poſſeſſed of every attribute requiſite to the production of the univerſe; it would be needleſs, I own, (though not abſurd), to ſuppoſe any other deity exiſtent. But while it is ſtill a queſtion, Whether all theſe attributes are united in one ſubject, or diſperſed among ſeveral independent beings; by what phenomena in nature can we pretend to decide the controverſy? Where we ſee a body raiſed in a ſcale, we are ſure that there is in the oppoſite ſcale, however concealed from ſight, ſome counterpoiſing weight equal to it: but it is ſtill allowed to doubt, whether that weight be an aggregate of ſeveral diſtinct bodies, or one uniform united maſs. And if the weight requiſite very much exceeds any thing which we have ever ſeen conjoined in any ſingle body, the former ſuppoſition becomes ſtill more probable and natural. An intelligent being of ſuch vaſt power and capacity as is neceſſary to produce the univerſe, or, to

ſpeak

ſpeak in the language of ancient philoſophy, ſo prodigious an animal, exceeds all analogy, and even comprehenſion.

But farther, Cleanthes: Men are mortal, and renew their ſpecies by generation; and this is common to all living creatures. The two great ſexes of male and female, ſays Milton, animate the world. Why muſt this circumſtance, ſo univerſal, ſo eſſential, be excluded from thoſe numerous and limited deities? Behold, then, the theogeny of ancient times brought back upon us.

And why not become a perfect Anthropomorphite? Why not aſſert the deity or deities to be corporeal, and to have eyes, a noſe, mouth, ears, &c.? Epicurus maintained, that no man had ever ſeen reaſon but in a human figure; therefore the gods muſt have a human figure. And this argument, which is deſervedly ſo much ridiculed by Cicero, becomes, according to you, ſolid and philoſophical.

In a word, Cleanthes, a man, who follows your hypotheſis, is able, perhaps, to aſſert, or conjecture, that the univerſe, ſometime, aroſe from ſomething like deſign: but beyond that poſition he cannot aſcertain one ſingle circumſtance; and is left afterwards to fix every point of his theology, by the utmoſt licence of fancy and hypotheſis. This world, for aught he knows, is very faulty and imperfect, compared to a ſuperior ſtandard; and was only the firſt rude eſſay of ſome infant deity, who afterwards abandoned it, aſhamed of his lame performance: it is the work only of ſome dependent, inferior deity; and is the object of deriſion to his ſuperiors: it is the production of old age and dotage in ſome ſuperannuated deity; and, ever ſince his death, has run on at adventures, from the firſt

firſt impulſe and active force which it received from him. You juſtly give ſigns of horror, Demea, at theſe ſtrange ſuppoſitions; but theſe, and a thouſand more of the ſame kind, are Cleanthes's ſuppoſitions, not mine. From the moment the attributes of the Deity are ſuppoſed finite, all theſe have place. And I cannot, for my part, think, that ſo wild and unſettled a ſyſtem of theology is, in any reſpect, preferable to none at all.

Theſe ſuppoſitions I abſolutely diſown, cried Cleanthes: they ſtrike me, however, with no horror; eſpecially when propoſed in that rambling way in which they drop from you. On the contrary, they give me pleaſure, when I ſee, that, by the utmoſt indulgence of your imagination, you never get rid of the hypotheſis of deſign in the univerſe; but are obliged at every turn to have recourſe to it. To this conceſſion I adhere ſteadily; and this I regard as a ſufficient foundation for religion.

PART VI.

IT muſt be a ſlight fabric, indeed, ſaid Demea, which can be erected on ſo tottering a foundation. While we are uncertain, whether there is one deity or many; whether the deity or deities, to whom we owe our exiſtence, be perfect or imperfect, ſubordinate or ſupreme, dead or alive; what truſt or confidence can we repoſe in them? What devotion or worſhip

worſhip addreſs to them? What veneration or obedience pay them? To all the purpoſes of life, the theory of religion becomes altogether uſeleſs: and even with regard to ſpeculative conſequences, its uncertainty, according to you, muſt render it totally precarious and unſatisfactory.

To render it ſtill more unſatisfactory, ſaid Philo, there occurs to me another hypotheſis, which muſt acquire an air of probability from the method of reaſoning ſo much inſiſted on by Cleanthes. That like effects ariſe from like cauſes: this principle he ſuppoſes the foundation of all religion. But there is another principle of the ſame kind, no leſs certain, and derived from the ſame ſource of experience; That where ſeveral known circumſtances are obſerved to be ſimilar, the unknown will alſo be found ſimilar. Thus, if we ſee the limbs of a human body, we conclude, that it is alſo attended with a human head, though hid from us. Thus, if we ſee, through a chink in a wall, a ſmall part of the ſun, we conclude, that, were the wall removed, we ſhould ſee the whole body. In ſhort, this method of reaſoning is ſo obvious and familiar, that no ſcruple can ever be made with regard to its ſolidity.

Now, if we ſurvey the univerſe, ſo far as it falls under our knowledge, it bears a great reſemblance to an animal or organized body, and ſeems actuated with a like principle of life and motion. A continual circulation of matter in it produces no diſorder; a continual waſte in every part is inceſſantly repaired: the cloſeſt ſympathy is perceived throughout the entire ſyſtem; and each part or member, in performing its proper offices, operates both to its own preſervation, and to that of the whole. The world, therefore, I infer,

fer, is an animal; and the Deity is the SOUL of the world, actuating it, and actuated by it.

You have too much learning, Cleanthes, to be at all surprised at this opinion, which, you know, was maintained by almost all the Theists of antiquity, and chiefly prevails in their discourses and reasonings. For though sometimes the ancient philosophers reason from final causes, as if they thought the world the workmanship of God; yet it appears rather their favourite notion to consider it as his body, whose organization renders it subservient to him. And it must be confessed, that as the universe resembles more a human body than it does the works of human art and contrivance; if our limited analogy could ever, with any propriety, be extended to the whole of nature, the inference seems juster in favour of the ancient than the modern theory.

There are many other advantages, too, in the former theory, which recommended it to the ancient Theologians. Nothing more repugnant to all their notions, because nothing more repugnant to common experience, than mind without body; a mere spiritual substance, which fell not under their senses nor comprehension, and of which they had not observed one single instance throughout all nature. Mind and body they knew, because they felt both: an order, arrangement, organization, or internal machinery, in both, they likewise knew, after the same manner: and it could not but seem reasonable to transfer this experience to the universe; and to suppose the divine mind and body to be also coeval, and to have, both of them, order and arrangement, naturally inherent in them, and inseparable from them.

Here,

Here, therefore, is a new ſpecies of Anthropomorphiſm, Cleanthes, on which you may deliberate; and a theory which ſeems not liable to any conſiderable difficulties. You are too much ſuperior, ſurely, to ſyſtematical prejudices, to find any more difficulty in ſuppoſing an animal body to be, originally, of itſelf, or from unknown cauſes, poſſeſſed of order and organization, than in ſuppoſing a ſimilar order to belong to mind. But the vulgar prejudice, that body and mind ought always to accompany each other, ought not, one ſhould think, to be entirely neglected; ſince it is founded on vulgar experience, the only guide which you profeſs to follow in all theſe theological inquiries. And if you aſſert, that our limited experience is an unequal ſtandard, by which to judge of the unlimited extent of nature; you entirely abandon your own hypotheſis, and muſt thenceforward adopt our Myſticiſm, as you call it, and admit of the abſolute incomprehenſibility of the Divine Nature.

This theory, I own, replied Cleanthes, has never before occurred to me, though a pretty natural one; and I cannot readily, upon ſo ſhort an examination and reflection, deliver any opinion with regard to it. You are very ſcrupulous, indeed, ſaid Philo: were I to examine any ſyſtem of yours, I ſhould not have acted with half that caution and reſerve, in ſtarting objections and difficulties to it. However, if any thing occur to you, you will oblige us by propoſing it.

Why then, replied Cleanthes, it ſeems to me, that though the world does, in many circumſtances, reſemble an animal body, yet is the analogy alſo defective in many circumſtances the moſt material: no organs of ſenſe; no ſeat of thought or reaſon; no one preciſe origin of motion and action. In ſhort, it ſeems

to

to bear a ſtronger reſemblance to a vegetable than to an animal; and your inference would be ſo far inconcluſive in favour of the ſoul of the world.

But, in the next place, your theory ſeems to imply the eternity of the world; and that is a principle which, I think, can be refuted by the ſtrongeſt reaſons and probabilities. I ſhall ſuggeſt an argument to this purpoſe, which, I believe, has not been inſiſted on by any writer. Thoſe who reaſon from the late origin of arts and ſciences, though their inference wants not force, may perhaps be refuted by conſiderations derived from the nature of human ſociety, which is in continual revolution, between ignorance and knowledge, liberty and ſlavery, riches and poverty; ſo that it is impoſſible for us, from our limited experience, to foretel with aſſurance what events may or may not be expected. Ancient learning and hiſtory ſeem to have been in great danger of entirely periſhing after the inundation of the barbarous nations; and had theſe convulſions continued a little longer, or been a little more violent, we ſhould not probably have now known what paſſed in the world a few centuries before us. Nay, were it not for the ſuperſtition of the Popes, who preſerved a little jargon of Latin, in order to ſupport the appearance of an ancient and univerſal church, that tongue muſt have been utterly loſt: in which caſe, the weſtern world, being totally barbarous, would not have been in a fit diſpoſition for receiving the Greek language and learning, which was conveyed to them after the ſacking of Conſtantinople. When learning and books had been extinguiſhed, even the mechanical arts would have fallen conſiderably to decay; and it is eaſily imagined, that fable or tradition might aſcribe to them a much later origin than the true one. This vulgar

vulgar argument, therefore, againſt the eternity of the world, ſeems a little precarious.

But here appears to be the foundation of a better argument. Lucullus was the firſt that brought cherry-trees from Aſia to Europe; though that tree thrives ſo well in many European climates, that it grows in the woods without any culture. Is it poſſible, that, throughout a whole eternity, no European had ever paſſed into Aſia, and thought of tranſplanting ſo delicious a fruit into his own country? Or if the tree was once tranſplanted and propagated, how could it ever afterwards periſh? Empires may riſe and fall; liberty and ſlavery ſucceed alternately; ignorance and knowledge give place to each other: but the cherry-tree will ſtill remain in the woods of Greece, Spain, and Italy, and will never be affected by the revolutions of human ſociety.

It is not two thouſand years ſince vines were tranſplanted into France; though there is no climate in the world more favourable to them. It is not three centuries ſince horſes, cows, ſheep, ſwine, dogs, corn, were known in America. Is it poſſible, that, during the revolutions of a whole eternity, there never aroſe a Columbus, who might open the communication between Europe and that continent? We may as well imagine, that all men would wear ſtockings for ten thouſand years, and never have the ſenſe to think of garters to tie them. All theſe ſeem convincing proofs of the youth, or rather infancy, of the world; as being founded on the operation of principles more conſtant and ſteady than thoſe by which human ſociety is governed and directed. Nothing leſs than a total convulſion of the elements will ever deſtroy all the Euro-

pean animals and vegetables which are now to be found in the Weſtern world.

And what argument have you againſt ſuch convulſions, replied Philo? Strong and almoſt inconteſtable proofs may be traced over the whole earth, that every part of this globe has continued for many ages entirely covered with water. And though order were ſuppoſed inſeparable from matter, and inherent in it; yet may matter be ſuſceptible of many and great revolutions, through the endleſs periods of eternal duration. The inceſſant changes, to which every part of it is ſubject, ſeem to intimate ſome ſuch general transformations; though at the ſame time it is obſervable, that all the changes and corruptions of which we have ever had experience, are but paſſages from one ſtate of order to another; nor can matter ever reſt in total deformity and confuſion. What we ſee in the parts, we may infer in the whole; at leaſt, that is the method of reaſoning on which you reſt your whole theory. And were I obliged to defend any particular ſyſtem of this nature (which I never willingly ſhould do), I eſteem none more plauſible than that which aſcribes an eternal inherent principle of order to the world; though attended with great and continual revolutions and alterations. This at once ſolves all difficulties; and if the ſolution, by being ſo general, is not entirely complete and ſatisfactory, it is at leaſt a theory that we muſt, ſooner or later, have recourſe to, whatever ſyſtem we embrace. How could things have been as they are, were there not an original, inherent principle of order ſomewhere, in thought or in matter? And it is very indifferent to which of theſe we give the preference. Chance has no place, on any hypotheſis, ſceptical or religious. Every thing is ſurely governed

governed by ſteady, inviolable laws. And, were the inmoſt eſſence of things laid open to us, we ſhould then diſcover a ſcene, of which, at preſent, we can have no idea. Inſtead of admiring the order of natural beings, we ſhould clearly ſee, that it was abſolutely impoſſible for them, in the ſmalleſt article, ever to admit of any other diſpoſition.

Were any one inclined to revive the ancient Pagan Theology, which maintained, as we learn from Heſiod, that this globe was governed by 30,000 deities, who aroſe from the unknown powers of nature; you would naturally object, Cleanthes, that nothing is gained by this hypotheſis; and that it is as eaſy to ſuppoſe all men and animals, beings more numerous, but leſs perfect, to have ſprung immediately from a like origin. Puſh the ſame inference a ſtep farther; and you will find a numerous ſociety of deities as explicable as one univerſal deity, who poſſeſſes, within himſelf, the powers and perfections of the whole ſociety. All theſe ſyſtems, then, of Scepticiſm, Polytheiſm, and Theiſm, you muſt allow, on your principles, to be on a like footing, and that no one of them has any advantage over the others. You may thence learn the fallacy of your principles.

PART VII.

BUT here, continued Philo, in examining the ancient ſyſtem of the ſoul of the world, there ſtrikes me, all on a ſudden, a new idea, which, if juſt, muſt go near to ſubvert all your reaſoning, and

deſtroy even your firſt inferences on which you repoſe ſuch confidence. If the univerſe bears a greater likeneſs to animal bodies and to vegetables, than to the works of human art, it is more probable that its cauſe reſembles the cauſe of the former than that of the latter; and its origin ought rather to be aſcribed to generation or vegetation, than to reaſon or deſign. Your concluſion, even according to your own principles, is therefore lame and defective.

Pray open up this argument a little farther, ſaid Demea; for I do not rightly apprehend it, in that conciſe manner in which you have expreſſed it.

Our friend Cleanthes, replied Philo, as you have heard, aſſerts, that ſince no queſtion of fact can be proved otherwiſe than by experience, the exiſtence of a deity admits not of proof from any other medium. The world, ſays he, reſembles the works of human contrivance: therefore its cauſe muſt alſo reſemble that of the other. Here we may remark, that the operation of one very ſmall part of nature, to wit, man, upon another very ſmall part, to wit, that inanimate matter lying within his reach, is the rule by which Cleanthes judges of the origin of the whole; and he meaſures objects, ſo widely diſproportioned, by the ſame individual ſtandard. But, to wave all objections drawn from this topic, I affirm, that there are other parts of the univerſe (beſides the machines of human invention) which bear ſtill a greater reſemblance to the fabric of the world, and which therefore afford a better conjecture concerning the univerſal origin of this ſyſtem. Theſe parts are, animals and vegetables. The world plainly reſembles more an animal or a vegetable, than it does a watch or a knitting-loom. Its cauſe, therefore, it is more probable, reſembles the cauſe of the

the former. The cauſe of the former is generation or vegetation. The cauſe, therefore, of the world, we may infer to be ſomething ſimilar or analogous to generation or vegetation.

But how is it conceivable, ſaid Demea, that the world can ariſe from any thing ſimilar to vegetation or generation?

Very eaſily, replied Philo. In like manner as a tree ſheds it ſeed into the neighbouring fields, and produces other trees; ſo the great vegetable, the world, or this planetary ſyſtem, produces within itſelf certain ſeeds; which, being ſcattered into the ſurrounding chaos, vegetate into new worlds. A comet, for inſtance, is the ſeed of a world; and after it has been fully ripened, by paſſing from ſun to ſun, and ſtar to ſtar, it is at laſt toſſed into the unformed elements which every where ſurround this univerſe, and immediately ſprouts up into a new ſyſtem.

Or if, for the ſake of variety (for I ſee no other advantage), we ſhould ſuppoſe this world to be an animal; a comet is the egg of this animal: and in like manner as an oſtrich lays its egg in the ſand, which, without any farther care, hatches the egg, and produces a new animal; ſo ..... I underſtand you, ſays Demea: But what wild, arbitrary ſuppoſitions are theſe? What *data* have you for ſuch extraordinary concluſions? And is the ſlight, imaginary reſemblance of the world to a vegetable or an animal, ſufficient to eſtabliſh the ſame inference with regard to both? Objects, which are in general ſo widely different, ought they to be a ſtandard for each other?

Right, cries Philo: This is the topic on which I have all along inſiſted. I have ſtill aſſerted, that we have no *data* to eſtabliſh any ſyſtem of coſmogony.

Our experience, ſo imperfect in itſelf, and ſo limited both in extent and duration, can afford us no probable conjecture concerning the whole of things. But if we muſt needs fix on ſome hypotheſis, by what rule, pray, ought we to determine our choice? Is there any other rule than the greater ſimilarity of the objects compared? And does not a plant or an animal, which ſprings from vegetation or generation, bear a ſtronger reſemblance to the world, than does any artificial machine, which ariſes from reaſon and deſign?

But what is this vegetation and generation of which you talk, ſaid Demea? Can you explain their operations, and anatomize that fine internal ſtructure on which they depend?

As much, at leaſt, replied Philo, as Cleanthes can explain the operations of reaſon, or anatomize that internal ſtructure on which it depends. But, without any ſuch elaborate diſquiſitions, when I ſee an animal, I infer that it ſprang from generation; and that with as great certainty as you conclude a houſe to have been reared by deſign. Theſe words, Generation, Reaſon, mark only certain powers and energies in nature, whoſe effects are known, but whoſe eſſence is incomprehenſible; and one of theſe principles, more than the other, has no privilege for being made a ſtandard to the whole of nature.

In reality, Demea, it may reaſonably be expected, that the larger the views are which we take of things, the better will they conduct us in our concluſions concerning ſuch extraordinary and ſuch magnificent ſubjects. In this little corner of the world alone, there are four principles, Reaſon, Inſtinct, Generation, Vegetation, which are ſimilar to each other, and are the cauſes of ſimilar effects. What a number of other principles

princ'ples may we naturally ſuppoſe in the immenſe extent and variety of the univerſe, could we travel from planet to planet, and from ſyſtem to ſyſtem, in order to examine each part of this mighty fabric? Any one of theſe four principles above mentioned (and a hundred others, which lie open to our conjecture) may afford us a theory, by which to judge of the origin of the world; and it is a palpable and egregious partiality, to confine our view entirely to that principle by which our own minds operate. Were this principle more intelligible on that account, ſuch a partiality might be ſomewhat excuſable: But reaſon, in its internal fabric and ſtructure, is really as little known to us as inſtinct or vegetation; and perhaps even that vague, undeterminate word, Nature, to which the vulgar refer every thing, is not at the bottom more inexplicable. The effects of theſe principles are all known to us from experience: But the principles themſelves, and their manner of operation, are totally unknown: Nor is it leſs intelligible, or leſs conformable to experience, to ſay, that the world aroſe by vegetation, from a ſeed ſhed by another world, than to ſay, that it aroſe from a divine reaſon or contrivance, according to the ſenſe in which Cleanthes underſtands it.

But methinks, ſaid Demea, if the world had a vegetative quality, and could ſow the ſeeds of new worlds into the infinite chaos, this power would be ſtill an additional argument for deſign in its author. For, whence could ariſe ſo wonderful a faculty, but from deſign? Or how can order ſpring from any thing which perceives not that order which it beſtows?

You need only look around you, replied Philo, to ſatisfy yourſelf with regard to this queſtion. A tree beſtows order and organization on that tree which

ſprings from it, without knowing the order: an animal, in the ſame manner, on its offspring; a bird, on its neſt: and inſtances of this kind are even more frequent in the world, than thoſe of order, which ariſe from reaſon and contrivance. To ſay that all this order in animals and vegetables proceeds ultimately from deſign, is begging the queſtion: nor can that great point be aſcertained otherwiſe than by proving, *à priori*, both that order is, from its nature, inſeparably attached to thought; and that it can never, of itſelf, or from original unknown principles, belong to matter.

But farther, Demea, this objection, which you urge, can never be made uſe of by Cleanthes, without renouncing a defence which he has already made againſt one of my objections. When I inquired concerning the cauſe of that ſupreme reaſon and intelligence, into which he reſolves every thing; he told me, that the impoſſibility of ſatisfying ſuch inquiries could never be admitted as an objection in any ſpecies of philoſophy. "We muſt ſtop ſomewhere," ſays he; "nor is it "ever within the reach of human capacity to explain "ultimate cauſes, or ſhow the laſt connections of any "objects. It is ſufficient if the ſteps, ſo far as we go, "are ſupported by experience and obſervation." Now, that vegetation and generation, as well as reaſon, are experienced to be principles of order in nature, is undeniable. If I reſt my ſyſtem of coſmogony on the former, preferably to the latter, it is at my choice: The matter ſeems entirely arbitrary. And when Cleanthes aſks me what is the cauſe of my great vegetative or generative faculty, I am equally entitled to aſk him the cauſe of his great reaſoning principle. Theſe queſtions we have agreed to forbear on both ſides; and it is chiefly

chiefly his intereſt, on the preſent occaſion, to ſtick to this agreement. Judging by our limited and imperfect experience, generation has ſome privileges above reaſon: For we ſee every day the latter ariſe from the former, never the former from the latter.

Compare, I beſeech you, the conſequences on both ſides. The world, ſay I, reſembles an animal; therefore it is an animal, therefore it aroſe from generation. The ſteps, I confeſs, are wide; yet there is ſome ſmall appearance of analogy in each ſtep. The world, ſays Cleanthes, reſembles a machine; therefore it is a machine; therefore it aroſe from deſign. The ſteps here are equally wide, and the analogy leſs ſtriking. And if he pretends to carry on my hypotheſis a ſtep farther, and to infer deſign or reaſon from the great principle of generation, on which I inſiſt; I may, with better authority, uſe the ſame freedom to puſh farther his hypotheſis, and infer a divine generation or theogeny from his principle of reaſon. I have at leaſt ſome faint ſhadow of experience, which is the utmoſt that can ever be attained in the preſent ſubject. Reaſon, in innumerable inſtances, is obſerved to ariſe from the principle of generation, and never to ariſe from any other principle.

Heſiod, and all the ancient mythologiſts, were ſo ſtruck with this analogy, that they univerſally explained the origin of nature from an animal birth and copulation. Plato, too, ſo far as he is intelligible, ſeems to have adopted ſome ſuch notion in his Timæus.

The Bramins aſſert, that the world aroſe from an infinite ſpider, who ſpun this whole complicated maſs from his bowels, and annihilates afterwards the whole, or any part of it, by abſorbing it again, and reſolving it into his own eſſence. Here is a ſpecies of coſmogony,

ny, which appears to us ridiculous; becauſe a ſpider is a little contemptible animal, whoſe operations we are never likely to take for a model of the whole univerſe. But ſtill here is a new ſpecies of analogy, even in our globe. And were there a planet wholly inhabited by ſpiders (which is very poſſible), this inference would there appear as natural and irrefragable as that which in our planet aſcribes the origin of all things to deſign and intelligence, as explained by Cleanthes. Why an orderly ſyſtem may not be ſpun from the belly as well as from the brain, it will be difficult for him to give a ſatisfactory reaſon.

I muſt confeſs, Philo, replied Cleanthes, that of all men living, the taſk which you have undertaken, of raiſing doubts and objections, ſuits you beſt; and ſeems, in a manner, natural and unavoidable to you. So great is your fertility of invention, that I am not aſhamed to acknowledge myſelf unable, on a ſudden, to ſolve regularly ſuch out-of-the-way difficulties as you inceſſantly ſtart upon me; though I clearly ſee, in general, their fallacy and error. And I queſtion not, but you are yourſelf, at preſent, in the ſame caſe, and have not the ſolution ſo ready as the objection: while you muſt be ſenſible, that common ſenſe and reaſon are entirely againſt you: and that ſuch whimſies as you have delivered, may puzzle, but never can convince us.

PART

PART VIII.

WHAT you aſcribe to the fertility of my invention, replied Philo, is entirely owing to the nature of the ſubject. In ſubjects, adapted to the narrow compaſs of human reaſon, there is commonly but one determination, which carries probability or conviction with it; and to a man of ſound judgment, all other ſuppoſitions, but that one, appear entirely abſurd and chimerical. But in ſuch queſtions as the preſent, a hundred contradictory views may preſerve a kind of imperfect analogy; and invention has here full ſcope to exert itſelf. Without any great effort of thought, I believe that I could, in an inſtant, propoſe other ſyſtems of coſmogony, which would have ſome faint appearance of truth; though it is a thouſand, a million to one, if either yours, or any one of mine, be the true ſyſtem.

For inſtance; what if I ſhould revive the old Epicurean hypotheſis? This is commonly, and I believe juſtly, eſteemed the moſt abſurd ſyſtem that has yet been propoſed; yet, I know not, whether, with a few alterations, it might not be brought to bear a faint appearance of probability. Inſtead of ſuppoſing matter infinite, as Epicurus did, let us ſuppoſe it finite. A finite number of particles is only ſuſceptible of finite tranſpoſitions: and it muſt happen, in an eternal duration, that every poſſible order or poſition muſt be tried an infinite number of times. This world, therefore,

fore, with all its events, even the moſt minute, has before been produced and deſtroyed, and will again be produced and deſtroyed, without any bounds and limitations. No one, who has a conception of the powers of infinite, in compariſon of finite, will ever ſcruple this determination.

But this ſuppoſes, ſaid Demea, that matter can acquire motion, without any voluntary agent, or firſt mover.

And where is the difficulty, replied Philo, of that ſuppoſition? Every event, before experience, is equally difficult and incomprehenſible; and every event, after experience, is equally eaſy and intelligible. Motion, in many inſtances, from gravity, from elaſticity, from electricity, begins in matter, without any known voluntary agent: and to ſuppoſe always, in theſe caſes, an unknown voluntary agent, is mere hypotheſis; and hypotheſis attended with no advantages. The beginning of motion in matter itſelf is as conceivable *à priori*, as its communication from mind and intelligence.

Beſides; why may not motion have been propagated by impulſe through all eternity; and the ſame ſtock of it, or nearly the ſame, be ſtill upheld in the univerſe? As much as is loſt by the compoſition of motion, as much is gained by its reſolution. And whatever the cauſes are, the fact is certain, that matter is, and always has been, in continual agitation, as far as human experience or tradition reaches. There is not probably, at preſent, in the whole univerſe, one particle of matter at abſolute reſt.

And this very conſideration too, continued Philo, which we have ſtumbled on in the courſe of the argument, ſuggeſts a new hypotheſis of coſmogony, that is

not

not abſolutely abſurd and improbable. Is there a ſyſtem, an order, an œconomy of things, by which matter can preſerve that perpetual agitation which ſeems eſſential to it, and yet maintain a conſtancy in the forms which it produces? There certainly is ſuch an œconomy: for this is actually the caſe with the preſent world. The continual motion of matter, therefore, in leſs than infinite tranſpoſitions, muſt produce this œconomy or order; and by its very nature, that order, when once eſtabliſhed, ſupports itſelf, for many ages, if not to eternity.

But wherever matter is ſo poiſed, arranged, and adjuſted, as to continue in perpetual motion, and yet preſerve a conſtancy in the forms; its ſituation muſt, of neceſſity, have all the ſame appearance of art and contrivance which we obſerve at preſent. All the parts of each form muſt have relation to each other, and to the whole: and the whole itſelf muſt have a relation to the other parts of the univerſe; to the element, in which the form ſubſiſts; to the materials, with which it repairs its waſte and decay; and to every other form, which is hoſtile or friendly. A defect in any of theſe particulars, deſtroys the form; and the matter of which it is compoſed is again ſet looſe, and is thrown into irregular motions and fermentations, till it unite itſelf to ſome other regular form. If no ſuch form be prepared to receive it, and if there be a great quantity of this corrupted matter in the univerſe, the univerſe itſelf is entirely diſordered; whether it be the feeble embryo of a world in its firſt beginnings that is thus deſtroyed, or the rotten carcaſe of one languiſhing in old age and infirmity. In either caſe, a chaos enſues; till finite, though innumerable, revolutions produce at laſt ſome forms, whoſe parts and organs

gans are ſo adjuſted as to ſupport the forms amidſt a continued ſucceſſion of matter.

Suppoſe (for we ſhall endeavour to vary the expreſſion) that matter were thrown into any poſition, by a blind, unguided force; it is evident, that this firſt poſition muſt in all probability be the moſt confuſed and moſt diſorderly imaginable, without any reſemblance to thoſe works of human contrivance, which, along with a ſymmetry of parts, diſcover an adjuſtment of means to ends, and a tendency to ſelf-preſervation. If the actuating force ceaſe after this operation, matter muſt remain for ever in diſorder, and continue an immenſe chaos, without any proportion or activity. But ſuppoſe, that the actuating force, whatever it be, ſtill continues in matter, this firſt poſition will immediately give place to a ſecond, which will likewiſe in all probability be as diſorderly as the firſt, and ſo on through many ſucceſſions of changes and revolutions. No particular order or poſition ever continues a moment unaltered. The original force, ſtill remaining in activity, gives a perpetual reſtleſſneſs to matter. Every poſſible ſituation is produced, and inſtantly deſtroyed. If a glimpſe or dawn of order appears for a moment, it is inſtantly hurried away, and confounded, by that never ceaſing force which actuates every part of matter.

Thus the univerſe goes on for many ages in a continued ſucceſſion of chaos and diſorder. But is it not poſſible that it may ſettle at laſt, ſo as not to loſe its motion and active force (for that we have ſuppoſed inherent in it), yet ſo as to preſerve an uniformity of appearance, amidſt the continual motion and fluctuation of its parts? This we find to be the caſe with the univerſe at preſent. Every individual is perpetually changing,

changing, and every part of every individual; and yet the whole remains in appearance the ſame. May we not hope for ſuch a poſition, or rather be aſſured of it, from the eternal revolutions of unguided matter; and may not this account for all the appearing wiſdom and contrivance which is in the univerſe? Let us contemplate the ſubject a little, and we ſhall find, that this adjuſtment, if attained by matter, of a ſeeming ſtability in the forms, with a real and perpetual revolution or motion of parts, affords a plauſible, if not a true, ſolution of the difficulty.

It is in vain, therefore, to inſiſt upon the uſes of the parts in animals or vegetables, and their curious adjuſtment to each other. I would fain know, how an animal could ſubſiſt, unleſs its parts were ſo adjuſted? Do we not find, that it immediately periſhes whenever this adjuſtment ceaſes, and that its matter, corrupting, tries ſome new form? It happens, indeed, that the parts of the world are ſo well adjuſted, that ſome regular form immediately lays claim to this corrupted matter: and, if it were not ſo, could the world ſuſtbſiſt? Muſt it not diſſolve as well as the animal, and paſs through new poſitions and ſituations; till in a great, but finite ſucceſſion, it fall at laſt into the preſent or ſome ſuch order?

It is well, replied Cleanthes, you told us, that this hypotheſis was ſuggeſted on a ſudden, in the courſe of the argument. Had you had leiſure to examine it, you would ſoon have perceived the inſuperable objections to which it is expoſed. No form, you ſay, can ſubſiſt, unleſs it poſſeſs thoſe powers and organs requiſite for its ſubſiſtence: ſome new order or œconomy muſt be tried, and ſo on, without intermiſſion; till at laſt ſome order, which can ſupport and maintain itſelf,

is

is fallen upon. But, according to this hypotheſis, whence ariſe the many conveniences and advantages which men and all animals poſſeſs? Two eyes, two ears, are not abſolutely neceſſary for the ſubſiſtence of the ſpecies. Human race might have been propagated and preſerved, without horſes, dogs, cows, ſheep, and thoſe innumerable fruits and products which ſerve to our ſatisfaction and enjoyment. If no camels had been created for the uſe of man in the ſandy deſarts of Africa and Arabia, would the world have been diſſolved? If no loadſtone had been framed to give that wonderful and uſeful direction to the needle, would human ſociety and the human kind have been immediately extinguiſhed? Though the maxims of Nature be in general very frugal, yet inſtances of this kind are far from being rare; and any one of them is a ſufficient proof of deſign; and of a benevolent deſign, which gave riſe to the order and arrangement of the univerſe.

At leaſt, you may ſafely infer, ſaid Philo, that the foregoing hypotheſis is ſo far incomplete and imperfect; which I ſhall not ſcruple to allow. But can we ever reaſonably expect greater ſucceſs in any attempts of this nature? Or can we ever hope to erect a ſyſtem of coſmogony, that will be liable to no exceptions, and will contain no circumſtance repugnant to our limited and imperfect experience of the analogy of Nature? Your theory itſelf cannot ſurely pretend to any ſuch advantage; even though you have run into Anthropomorphiſm, the better to preſerve a conformity to common experience. Let us once more put it to trial. In all inſtances which we have ever ſeen, ideas are copied from real objects, and are ectypal, not archetypal, to expreſs myſelf in learned terms: You reverſe this order, and give thought the precedence. In all inſtances

ces which we have ever ſeen, thought has no influence upon matter, except where that matter is ſo conjoined with it as to have an equal reciprocal influence upon it. No animal can move immediately any thing but the members of its own body; and indeed, the equality of action and re-action ſeems to be an univerſal law of Nature: But your theory implies a contradiction to this experience. Theſe inſtances, with many more, which it were eaſy to collect, (particularly the ſuppoſition of a mind or ſyſtem of thought that is eternal, or, in other words, an animal ingenerable and immortal); theſe inſtances, I ſay, may teach all of us ſobriety in condemning each other; and let us ſee, that as no ſyſtem of this kind ought ever to be received from a ſlight analogy, ſo neither ought any to be rejected on account of a ſmall incongruity. For that is an inconvenience from which we can juſtly pronounce no one to be exempted.

All religious ſyſtems, it is confeſſed, are ſubject to great and inſuperable difficulties. Each diſputant triumphs in his turn; while he carries on an offenſive war, and expoſes the abſurdities, barbarities, and pernicious tenets, of his antagoniſt. But all of them, on the whole, prepare a complete triumph for the Sceptic; who tells them, that no ſyſtem ought ever to be embraced with regard to ſuch ſubjects; for this plain reaſon, that no abſurdity ought ever to be aſſented to with regard to any ſubject. A total ſuſpenſe of judgment is here our only reaſonable reſource. And if every attack, as is commonly obſerved, and no defence, among Theologians, is ſucceſsful; how complete muſt be his victory, who remains always, with all mankind, on the offenſive, and has himſelf no fixed ſtation or abiding city, which he is ever, on any occaſion, obliged to defend?

PART IX.

BUT if ſo many difficulties attend the argument *à poſteriori*, ſaid Demea; had we not better adhere to that ſimple and ſublime argument *à priori*, which, by offering to us infallible demonſtration, cuts off at once all doubt and difficulty? By this argument, too, we may prove the INFINITY of the divine attributes; which, I am afraid, can never be aſcertained with certainty from any other topic. For how can an effect, which either is finite, or, for aught we know, may be ſo; how can ſuch an effect, I ſay, prove an infinite cauſe? The unity too of the Divine Nature, it is very difficult, if not abſolutely impoſſible, to deduce merely from contemplating the works of nature; nor will the uniformity alone of the plan, even were it allowed, give us any aſſurance of that attribute. Whereas the argument *à priori*.....

You ſeem to reaſon, Demea, interpoſed Cleanthes, as if thoſe advantages and conveniences in the abſtract argument were full proofs of its ſolidity. But it is firſt proper, in my opinion, to determine what argument of this nature you chooſe to inſiſt on; and we ſhall afterwards, from itſelf, better than from its uſeful conſequences, endeavour to determine what value we ought to put upon it.

The argument, replied Demea, which I would inſiſt on, is the common one. Whatever exiſts, muſt have a cauſe or reaſon of its exiſtence; it being abſolutely impoſſible for any thing to produce itſelf, or be the

the cauſe of its own exiſtence. In mounting up, therefore, from effects to cauſes, we muſt either go on in tracing an infinite ſucceſſion, without any ultimate cauſe at all; or muſt at laſt have recourſe to ſome ultimate cauſe, that is neceſſarily exiſtent. Now, that the firſt ſuppoſition is abſurd, may be thus proved: In the infinite chain or ſucceſſion of cauſes and effects, each ſingle effect is determined to exiſt by the power and efficacy of that cauſe which immediately preceded; but the whole eternal chain or ſucceſſion, taken together, is not determined or cauſed by any thing; and yet it is evident that it requires a cauſe or reaſon, as much as any particular object which begins to exiſt in time. The queſtion is ſtill reaſonable, Why this particular ſucceſſion of cauſes exiſted from eternity, and not any other ſucceſſion, or no ſucceſſion at all? If there be no neceſſarily-exiſtent being, any ſuppoſition which can be formed is equally poſſible; nor is there any more abſurdity in Nothing's having exiſted from eternity, than there is in that ſucceſſion of cauſes which conſtitutes the univerſe. What was it then which determined Something to exiſt rather than Nothing, and beſtowed being on a particular poſſibility, excluſive of the reſt? External Cauſes, there are ſuppoſed to be none. Chance, is a word without a meaning. Was it Nothing? But that can never produce any thing. We muſt, therefore, have recourſe to a neceſſarily-exiſtent Being, who carries the REASON of his exiſtence in himſelf; and who cannot be ſuppoſed not to exiſt, without an expreſs contradiction. There is conſequently ſuch a Being; that is, there is a Deity.

I ſhall not leave it to Philo, ſaid Cleanthes, (though I know that the ſtarting objections is his chief delight)

to point out the weakneſs of this metaphyſical reaſoning. It ſeems to me ſo obviouſly ill grounded, and at the ſame time of ſo little conſequence to the cauſe of true piety and religion, that I ſhall myſelf venture to ſhow the fallacy of it.

I ſhall begin with obſerving, that there is an evident abſurdity in pretending to demonſtrate a matter of fact, or to prove it by any arguments *a priori*. Nothing is demonſtrable, unleſs the contrary implies a contradiction. Nothing, that is diſtinctly conceivable, implies a contradiction. Whatever we conceive as exiſtent, we can alſo conceive as non-exiſtent. There is no being, therefore, whoſe non-exiſtence implies a contradiction. Conſequently there is no being whoſe exiſtence is demonſtrable. I propoſe this argument as entirely deciſive, and am willing to reſt the whole controverſy upon it.

It is pretended that the Deity is a neceſſarily-exiſtent being; and this neceſſity of his exiſtence is attempted to be explained by aſſerting, that, if we knew his whole eſſence or nature, we ſhould perceive it to be as impoſſible for him not to exiſt, as for twice two not to be four. But it is evident, that this can never happen, while our faculties remain the ſame as at preſent. It will ſtill be poſſible for us, at any time, to conceive the non-exiſtence of what we formerly conceived to exiſt; nor can the mind ever lie under a neceſſity of ſuppoſing any object to remain always in being; in the ſame manner as we lie under a neceſſity of always conceiving twice two be four. The words, therefore, Neceſſary Exiſtence, have no meaning; or, which is the ſame thing, none that is conſiſtent.

But farther: Why may not the material univerſe be the neceſſarily-exiſtent Being, according to this pretended

tended explication of neceſſity? We dare not affirm that we know all the qualities of matter; and, for aught we can determine, it may contain ſome qualities, which, were they known, would make its non-exiſtence appear as great a contradiction as that twice two is five. I find only one argument employed to prove, that the material world is not the neceſſarily-exiſtent Being; and this argument is derived from the contingency both of the matter and the form of the world. "Any particle of matter," it is ſaid *, "may "be conceived to be annihilated; and any form may "be conceived to be altered. Such an annihilation or "alteration, therefore, is not impoſſible." But it ſeems a great partiality not to perceive, that the ſame argument extends equally to the Deity, ſo far as we have any conception of him; and that the mind can at leaſt imagine him to be non-exiſtent, or his attributes to be altered. It muſt be ſome unknown, inconceivable qualities, which can make his non-exiſtence appear impoſſible, or his attributes unalterable: And no reaſon can be aſſigned, why theſe qualities may not belong to matter. As they are altogether unknown and inconceivable, they can never be proved incompatible with it.

Add to this, that in tracing an eternal ſucceſſion of objects, it ſeems abſurd to inquire for a general cauſe or firſt author. How can any thing, that exiſts from eternity, have a cauſe; ſince that relation implies a priority in time, and a beginning of exiſtence?

In ſuch a chain, too, or ſucceſſion of objects, each part is cauſed by that which preceded it, and cauſes that which ſucceeds it. Where then is the difficulty? But the WHOLE, you ſay, wants a cauſe. I anſwer,

* Dr Clarke.

that the uniting of theſe parts into a whole, like the uniting of ſeveral diſtinct counties into one kingdom, or ſeveral diſtinct members into one body, is performed merely by an arbitrary act of the mind, and has no influence on the nature of things. Did I ſhow you the particular cauſes of each individual in a collection of twenty particles of matter, I ſhould think it very unreaſonable, ſhould you afterwards aſk me, what was the cauſe of the whole twenty? That is ſufficiently explained in explaining the cauſe of the parts.

Though the reaſonings which you have urged, Cleanthes, may well excuſe me, ſaid Philo, from ſtarting any farther difficulties; yet I cannot forbear inſiſting ſtill upon another topic. It is obſerved by arithmeticians, that the products of 9 compoſe always either 9, or ſome leſſer product of 9; if you add together all the characters of which any of the former products is compoſed. Thus, of 18, 27, 36, which are products of 9, you make 9 by adding 1 to 8, 2 to 7, 3 to 6. Thus, 369 is a product alſo of 9; and if you add, 3, 6, and 9, you make 18, a leſſer product of 9*. To a ſuperficial obſerver, ſo wonderful a regularity may be admired as the effect either of chance or deſign: but a ſkilful algebraiſt immediately concludes it to be the work of neceſſity; and demonſtrates, that it muſt for ever reſult from the nature of theſe numbers. Is it not probable, I aſk, that the whole œconomy of the univerſe is conducted by a like neceſſity, though no human algebra can furniſh a key which ſolves the difficulty? And inſtead of admiring the order of natural beings, may it not happen, that, could we penetrate into the intimate nature of bodies, we ſhould clearly ſee why it was abſolutely impoſſible they

* Republique des Lettres, Aout 1685.

they could ever admit of any other diſpoſition? So dangerous is it to introduce this idea of neceſſity into the preſent queſtion! and ſo naturally does it afford an inference directly oppoſite to the religious hypotheſis!

But, dropping all theſe abſtractions, continued Philo, and confining ourſelves to more familiar topics; I ſhall venture to add an obſervation, that the argument *à priori* has ſeldom been found very convincing, except to people of a metaphyſical head, who have accuſtomed themſelves to abſtract reaſoning, and who, finding from mathematics, that the underſtanding frequently leads to truth, through obſcurity, and contrary to firſt appearances, have transferred the ſame habit of thinking to ſubjects where it ought not to have place. Other people, even of good ſenſe and the beſt inclined to religion, feel always ſome deficiency in ſuch arguments, though they are not perhaps able to explain diſtinctly where it lies. A certain proof, that men ever did, and ever will, derive their religion from other ſources than from this ſpecies of reaſoning.

PART X.

IT is my opinion, I own, replied Demea, that each man feels, in a manner, the truth of religion within his own breaſt; and, from a conſciouſneſs of his imbecility and miſery, rather than from any reaſoning, is led to ſeek protection from that Being, on whom he and all nature is dependent. So anxious or ſo tedious are even the beſt ſcenes of life, that futurity is ſtill the

object of all our hopes and fears. We inceſſantly look forward, and endeavour, by prayers, adoration, and ſacrifice, to appeaſe thoſe unknown powers, whom we find, by experience, ſo able to afflict and oppreſs us. Wretched creatures that we are! what reſource for us amidſt the innumerable ills of life, did not religion ſuggeſt ſome methods of atonement, and appeaſe thoſe terrors with which we are inceſſantly agitated and tormented?

I am indeed perſuaded, ſaid Philo, that the beſt, and indeed the only, method of bringing every one to a due ſenſe of religion, is by juſt repreſentations of the miſery and wickedneſs of men. And, for that purpoſe, a talent of eloquence and ſtrong imagery is more requiſite than that of reaſoning and argument. For, is it neceſſary to prove what every one feels within himſelf? It is only neceſſary to make us feel it, if poſſible, more intimately and ſenſibly.

The people, indeed, replied Demea, are ſufficiently convinced of this great and melancholy truth. The miſeries of life; the unhappineſs of man; the general corruptions of our nature; the unſatisfactory enjoyment of pleaſures, riches, honours; theſe phraſes have become almoſt proverbial in all languages. And who can doubt of what all men declare from their own immediate feeling and experience?

In this point, ſaid Philo, the learned are perfectly agreed with the vulgar; and in all letters, ſacred and profane, the topic of human miſery has been inſiſted on with the moſt pathetic eloquence that ſorrow and melancholy could inſpire. The poets, who ſpeak from ſentiment, without a ſyſtem, and whoſe teſtimony has therefore the more authority, abound in images of this nature. From Homer, down to Dr Young, the whole inſpired

inſpired tribe have ever been ſenſible, that no other repreſentation of things would ſuit the feeling and obſervation of each individual.

As to authorities, replied Demea, you need not ſeek them. Look round this library of Cleanthes. I ſhall venture to affirm, that, except authors of particular ſciences, ſuch as chemiſtry or botany, who have no occaſion to treat of human life, there is ſcarce one of thoſe innumerable writers, from whom the ſenſe of human miſery has not, in ſome paſſage or other, extorted a complaint and confeſſion of it. At leaſt, the chance is entirely on that ſide; and no one author has ever, ſo far as I can recollect, been ſo extravagant as to deny it.

There you muſt excuſe me, ſaid Philo: Leibnitz has denied it; and is perhaps the firſt * who ventured upon ſo bold and paradoxical an opinion; at leaſt the firſt who made it eſſential to his philoſophical ſyſtem.

And by being the firſt, replied Demea, might he not have been ſenſible of his error? For, is this a ſubject in which philoſophers can propoſe to make diſcoveries, eſpecially in ſo late an age? And can any man hope, by a ſimple denial (for the ſubject ſcarcely admits of reaſoning), to bear down the united teſtimony of mankind, founded on ſenſe and conſciouſneſs?

And why ſhould man, added he, pretend to an exemption from the lot of all other animals? The whole earth, believe me, Philo, is curſed and polluted. A perpetual war is kindled amongſt all living creatures. Neceſſity, hunger, want, ſtimulate the ſtrong and courageous:

* That ſentiment had been maintained by Dr King, and ſome few others, before Leibnitz; though by none of ſo great fame as that German philoſopher.

rageous: Fear, anxiety, terror, agitate the weak and infirm. The firſt entrance into life gives anguiſh to the new-born infant, and to its wretched parent: Weakneſs, impotence, diſtreſs, attend each ſtage of that life: and it is at laſt finiſhed in agony and horror.

Obſerve too, ſays Philo, the curious artifices of Nature, in order to embitter the life of every living being. The ſtronger prey upon the weaker, and keep them in perpetual terror and anxiety. The weaker too, in their turn, often prey upon the ſtronger, and vex and moleſt them without relaxation. Conſider that innumerable race of inſects, which either are bred on the body of each animal, or, flying about, infix their ſtings in him. Theſe inſects have others ſtill leſs than themſelves, which torment them. And thus, on each hand, before and behind, above and below, every animal is ſurrounded with enemies, which inceſſantly ſeek his miſery and deſtruction.

Man alone, ſaid Demea, ſeems to be, in part, an exception to this rule. For, by combination in ſociety, he can eaſily maſter lions, tygers, and bears, whoſe greater ſtrength and agility naturally enable them to prey upon him.

On the contrary, it is here chiefly, cried Philo, that the uniform and equal maxims of Nature are moſt apparent. Man, it is true, can, by combination, ſurmount all his real enemies, and become maſter of the whole animal creation: but, does he not immediately raiſe up to himſelf imaginary enemies, the dæmons of his fancy, who haunt him with ſuperſtitious terrors, and blaſt every enjoyment of life? His pleaſure, as he imagines, becomes, in their eyes, a crime: his food and repoſe give them umbrage and offence: his very ſleep and dreams furniſh new materials to anxious fear:

and

and even death, his refuge from every other ill, preſents only the dread of endleſs and innumerable woes. Nor does the wolf moleſt more the timid flock, than ſuperſtition does the anxious breaſt of wretched mortals.

Beſides, conſider, Demea, this very ſociety, by which we ſurmount thoſe wild beaſts, our natural enemies; what new enemies does it not raiſe to us? What wo and miſery does it not occaſion? Man is the greateſt enemy of man. Oppreſſion, injuſtice, contempt, contumely, violence, ſedition, war, calumny, treachery, fraud; by theſe they mutually torment each other: and they would ſoon diſſolve that ſociety which they had formed, were it not for the dread of ſtill greater ills which muſt attend their ſeparation.

But though theſe external inſults, ſaid Demea, from animals, from men, from all the elements, which aſſault us, form a frightful catalogue of woes, they are nothing in compariſon of thoſe which ariſe within ourſelves, from the diſtempered condition of our mind and body. How many ly under the lingering torment of diſeaſes? Hear the pathetic enumeration of the great poet.

> Inteſtine ſtone and ulcer, colic-pangs,
> Dæmoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,
> And moon-ſtruck madneſs, pining atrophy,
> Maraſmus, and wide-waſting peſtilence.
> Dire was the toſſing, deep the groans. DESPAIR
> Tended the ſick, buſieſt from couch to couch.
> And over them triumphant DEATH his dart
> Shook; but delay'd to ſtrike, tho' oft invok'd
> With vows, as their chief good and final hope.

The diſorders of the mind, continued Demea, though more ſecret, are not perhaps leſs diſmal and vexatious,

vexatious. Remorſe, ſhame, anguiſh, rage, diſappointment, anxiety, fear, dejection, deſpair; who has ever paſſed through life without cruel inroads from theſe tormentors? How many have ſcarcely ever felt any better ſenſations? Labour and poverty, ſo abhorred by every one, are the certain lot of the far greater number: and thoſe few privileged perſons, who enjoy eaſe and opulence, never reach contentment or true felicity. All the goods of life united, would not make a very happy man: but all the ills united would make a wretch indeed; and any one of them almoſt (and who can be free from every one?) nay, often the abſence of one good (and who can poſſeſs all?) is ſufficient to render life ineligible.

Were a ſtranger to drop, on a ſudden, into this world, I would ſhow him, as a ſpecimen of its ills, an hoſpital full of diſeaſes, a priſon crowded with malefactors and debtors, a field of battle ſtrewed with carcaſes, a fleet foundering in the ocean, a nation languiſhing under tyranny, famine, or peſtilence. To turn the gay ſide of life to him, and give him a notion of its pleaſures; whither ſhould I conduct him? To a ball, to an opera, to court? He might juſtly think that I was only ſhowing him a diverſity of diſtreſs and ſorrow.

There is no evading ſuch ſtriking inſtances, ſaid Philo, but by apologies, which ſtill farther aggravate the charge. Why have all men, I aſk, in all ages, complained inceſſantly of the miſeries of life?—They have no juſt reaſon, ſays one: theſe complaints proceed only from their diſcontented, repining, anxious diſpoſition.—And can there poſſibly, I reply, be a more certain foundation of miſery, than ſuch a wretched temper?

But

But if they were really as unhappy as they pretend, ſays my antagoniſt, why do they remain in life?

Not ſatisfied with life, afraid of death.

This is the ſecret chain, ſay I, that holds us. We are terrified, not bribed, to the continuance of our exiſtence.

It is only a falſe delicacy, he may inſiſt, which a few refined ſpirits indulge, and which has ſpread theſe complaints among the whole race of mankind.—And what is this delicacy, I aſk, which you blame? Is it any thing but a greater ſenſibility to all the pleaſures and pains of life? And if the man of a delicate, refined temper, by being ſo much more alive than the reſt of the world, is only ſo much more unhappy; what judgment muſt we form in general of human life?

Let men remain at reſt, ſays our adverſary; and they will be eaſy. They are willing artificers of their own miſery.—No! reply I: an anxious languor follows their repoſe; diſappointment, vexation, trouble, their activity and ambition.

I can obſerve ſomething like what you mention in ſome others, replied Cleanthes: but I confeſs, I feel little or nothing of it in myſelf; and hope that it is not ſo common as you repreſent it.

If you feel not human miſery, yourſelf, cried Demea, I congratulate you on ſo happy a ſingularity. Others, ſeemingly the moſt proſperous, have not been aſhamed to vent their complaints in the moſt melancholy ſtrains. Let us attend to the great, the fortunate emperor Charles V.; when, tired with human grandeur, he reſigned all his extenſive dominions into the hands of his ſon. In the laſt harangue which he made on that memorable occaſion, he publicly avowed, "that the "greateſt proſperities which he had ever enjoyed, had

"been

" been mixed with ſo many adverſities, that he might " truly ſay he had never enjoyed any ſatisfaction or " contentment." But did the retired life, in which he ſought for ſhelter, afford him any greater happineſs? If we may credit his ſon's account, his repentance commenced the very day of his reſignation.

Cicero's fortune, from ſmall beginnings, roſe to the greateſt luſtre and renown; yet what pathetic complaints of the ills of life do his familiar letters, as well as philoſophical diſcourſes, contain? And ſuitably to his own experience, he introduces Cato, the great, the fortunate Cato, proteſting in his old age, that had he a new life in his offer, he would reject the preſent.

Aſk yourſelf, aſk any of your acquaintance, whether they would live over again the laſt ten or twenty years of their life? No! but the next twenty, they ſay, will be better:

> And from the dregs of life, hope to receive
> What the firſt ſprightly running could not give.

Thus at laſt they find (ſuch is the greatneſs of human miſery, it reconciles even contradictions) that they complain, at once, of the ſhortneſs of life, and of its vanity and ſorrow.

And is it poſſible, Cleanthes, ſaid Philo, that after all theſe reflections, and infinitely more, which might be ſuggeſted, you can ſtill perſevere in your Anthropomorphiſm, and aſſert the moral attributes of the Deity, his juſtice, benevolence, mercy, and rectitude, to be of the ſame nature with theſe virtues in human creatures? His power we allow infinite: whatever he wills is executed: but neither man nor any other animal is happy: therefore he does not will their happineſs. His wiſdom is infinite: he is never miſtaken in chooſing the means to any end: but the courſe of Nature

ture tends not to numan or animal felicity: therefore it is not eſtabliſhed for that purpoſe. Through the whole compaſs of human knowledge, there are no inferences more certain and infallible than theſe. In what reſpect, then, do his benevolence and mercy reſemble the benevolence and mercy of men?

Epicurus's old queſtions are yet unanſwered.

Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? then is he impotent. Is he able, but not willing? then is he malevolent. Is he both able and willing? whence then is evil?

You aſcribe, Cleanthes, (and I believe juſtly) a purpoſe and intention to Nature. But what, I beſeech you, is the object of that curious artifice and machinery, which ſhe has diſplayed in all animals? The preſervation alone of individuals, and propagation of the ſpecies. It ſeems enough for her purpoſe, if ſuch a rank be barely upheld in the univerſe, without any care or concern for the happineſs of the members that compoſe it. No reſource for this purpoſe: no machinery, in order merely to give pleaſure or eaſe: no fund of pure joy and contentment: no indulgence, without ſome want or neceſſity accompanying it. At leaſt, the few phenomena of this nature are overbalanced by oppoſite phenomena of ſtill greater importance.

Our ſenſe of muſic, harmony, and indeed beauty of all kinds, gives ſatisfaction, without being abſolutely neceſſary, to the preſervation and propagation of the ſpecies. But what racking pains, on the other hand, ariſe from gouts, gravels, megrims, toothachs, rheumatiſms; where the injury to the animal-machinery is either ſmall or incurable? Mirth, laughter, play, frolic, ſeem gratuitous ſatisfactions, which have no farther tendency: ſpleen, melancholy, diſcontent, ſuperſtition,

perſtition, are pains of the ſame nature. How then does the divine benevolence diſplay itſelf, in the ſenſe of you Anthropomorphites? None but we Myſtics, as you were pleaſed to call us, can account for this ſtrange mixture of phenomena, by deriving it from attributes, infinitely perfect, but incomprehenſible.

And have you at laſt, ſaid Cleanthes ſmiling, betrayed your intentions, Philo? Your long agreement with Demea did indeed a little ſurpriſe me; but I find you were all the while erecting a concealed battery againſt me. And I muſt confeſs, that you have now fallen upon a ſubject worthy of your noble ſpirit of oppoſition and controverſy. If you can make out the preſent point, and prove mankind to be unhappy or corrupted, there is an end at once of all religion. For, to what purpoſe eſtabliſh the natural attributes of the Deity, while the moral are ſtill doubtful and uncertain?

You take umbrage very eaſily, replied Demea, at opinions the moſt innocent, and the moſt generally received, even amongſt the religious and devout themſelves: and nothing can be more ſurpriſing than to find a topic like this, concerning the wickedneſs and miſery of man, charged with no leſs than Atheiſm and profaneneſs. Have not all pious divines and preachers, who have indulged their rhetoric on ſo fertile a ſubject; have they not eaſily, I ſay, given a ſolution of any difficulties which may attend it? This world is but a point in compariſon of the univerſe; this life but a moment in compariſon of eternity. The preſent evil phenomena, therefore, are rectified in other regions, and in ſome future period of exiſtence. And the eyes of men, being then opened to larger views of things, ſee the whole connection of general laws; and trace, with adoration, the benevolence and rectitude of the

the Deity, through all the mazes and intricacies of his providence.

No! replied Cleanthes, No! Theſe arbitrary ſuppoſitions can never be admitted, contrary to matter of fact, viſible and uncontroverted. Whence can any cauſe be known, but from its known effects? Whence can any hypotheſis be proved, but from the apparent phænomena? To eſtabliſh one hypotheſis upon another, is building entirely in the air; and the utmoſt we ever attain, by theſe conjectures and fictions, is to aſcertain the bare poſſibility of our opinion; but never can we, upon ſuch terms, eſtabliſh its reality.

The only method of ſupporting divine benevolence (and it is what I willingly embrace) is to deny abſolutely the miſery and wickedneſs of man. Your repreſentations are exaggerated; your melancholy views moſtly fictitious; your inferences contrary to fact and experience. Health is more common than ſickneſs; pleaſure than pain; happineſs than miſery. And for one vexation which we meet with, we attain, upon computation, a hundred enjoyments.

Admitting your poſition, replied Philo, which yet is extremely doubtful, you muſt, at the ſame time, allow, that, if pain be leſs frequent than pleaſure, it is infinitely more violent and durable. One hour of it is often able to outweigh a day, a week, a month of our common inſipid enjoyments: And how many days, weeks, and months, are paſſed by ſeveral in the moſt acute torments? Pleaſure, ſcarcely in one inſtance, is ever able to reach ecſtaſy and rapture: And in no one inſtance can it continue for any time at its higheſt pitch and altitude. The ſpirits evaporate, the nerves relax, the fabric is diſordered, and the enjoyment quickly degenerates into fatigue and uneaſineſs. But

pain often, good God! how often, riſes to torture and agony; and the longer it continues, it becomes ſtill more genuine agony and torture. Patience is exhauſted, courage languiſhes, melancholy ſeizes us; and nothing terminates our miſery but the removal of its cauſe, or another event, which is the ſole cure of all evil; but which, from our natural folly, we regard with ſtill greater horror and conſternation.

But not to inſiſt upon theſe topics, continued Philo, though moſt obvious, certain, and important, I muſt uſe the freedom to admoniſh you, Cleanthes, that you have put the controverſy upon a moſt dangerous iſſue, and are unawares introducing a total ſcepticiſm into the moſt eſſential articles of natural and revealed theology. What! no method of fixing a juſt foundation for religion, unleſs we allow the happineſs of human life, and maintain a continued exiſtence, even in this world, with all our preſent pains, infirmities, vexations, and follies, to be eligible and deſirable! But this is contrary to every one's feeling and experience: It is contrary to an authority ſo eſtabliſhed as nothing can ſubvert: No deciſive proofs can ever be produced againſt this authority; nor is it poſſible for you to compute, eſtimate, and compare, all the pains and all the pleaſures in the lives of all men and of all animals: And thus, by your reſting the whole ſyſtem of religion on a point, which, from its very nature, muſt for ever be uncertain, you tacitly confeſs, that that ſyſtem is equally uncertain.

But allowing you, what never will be believed, at leaſt what you never poſſibly can prove, that animal, or at leaſt human happineſs, in this life, exceeds its miſery, you have yet done nothing: for this is not, by any means, what we expect from infinite power, infinite

nite wiſdom, and infinite goodneſs. Why is there any miſery at all in the world? Not by chance, ſurely. From ſome cauſe then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent. Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can ſhake the ſolidity of this reaſoning, ſo ſhort, ſo clear, ſo deciſive; except we aſſert, that theſe ſubjects exceed all human capacity, and that our common meaſures of truth and falſehood are not applicable to them; a topic which I have all along inſiſted on, but which you have from the beginning rejected with ſcorn and indignation.

But I will be contented to retire ſtill from this intrenchment; for I deny that you can ever force me in it: I will allow, that pain or miſery in man is compatible with infinite power and goodneſs in the Deity, even in your ſenſe of theſe attributes: What are you advanced by all theſe conceſſions? A mere poſſible compatibility is not ſufficient. You muſt prove theſe pure, unmixed, and uncontrollable attributes from the preſent mixed and confuſed phænomena, and from theſe alone. A hopeful undertaking! Were the phænomena ever ſo pure and unmixed, yet, being finite, they would be inſufficient for that purpoſe. How much more, where they are alſo ſo jarring and diſcordant?

Here, Cleanthes, I find myſelf at eaſe in my argument. Here I triumph. Formerly, when we argued concerning the natural attributes of intelligence and deſign, I needed all my ſceptical and metaphyſical ſubtilty to elude your graſp. In many views of the univerſe, and of its parts, particularly the latter, the beauty and fitneſs of final cauſes ſtrike us with ſuch irreſiſtible force, that all objections appear (what I believe they

they really are) mere cavils and ſophiſms; nor can we then imagine how it was ever poſſible for us to repoſe any weight on them. But there is no view of human life, or of the condition of mankind, from which, without the greateſt violence, we can infer the moral attributes, or learn that infinite benevolence, conjoined with infinite power and infinite wiſdom, which we muſt diſcover by the eyes of faith alone. It is your turn now to tug the labouring oar, and to ſupport your philoſophical ſubtilties againſt the dictates of plain reaſon and experience.

PART XI.

I Scruple not to allow, ſaid Cleanthes, that I have been apt to ſuſpect the frequent repetition of the word Infinite, which we meet with in all theological writers, to favour more of panegyric than of philoſophy; and that any purpoſes of reaſoning, and even of religion, would be better ſerved, were we to reſt contented with more accurate and more moderate expreſſions. The terms, admirable, excellent, ſuperlatively great, wiſe, and holy; theſe ſufficiently fill the imaginations of men; and any thing beyond, beſides that it leads into abſurdities, has no influence on the affections or ſentiments. Thus, in the preſent ſubject, if we abandon all human analogy, as ſeems your intention, Demea, I am afraid we abandon all religion, and retain no conception of the great object of our adoration. If we preſerve human analogy, we muſt for ever find it impoſſible to reconcile any mixture of evil in the

the univerſe with infinite attributes; much leſs can we ever prove the latter from the former. But ſuppoſing the Author of Nature to be finitely perfect, though far exceeding mankind; a ſatisfactory account may then be given of natural and moral evil, and every untoward phenomenon be explained and adjuſted. A leſs evil may then be choſen, in order to avoid a greater: inconveniences be ſubmitted to, in order to reach a deſirable end: And, in a word, benevolence, regulated by wiſdom, and limited by neceſſity, may produce juſt ſuch a world as the preſent. You, Philo, who are ſo prompt at ſtarting views, and reflections, and analogies; I would gladly hear, at length, without interruption, your opinion of this new theory; and if it deſerve our attention, we may afterwards, at more leiſure, reduce it into form.

My ſentiments, replied Philo, are not worth being made a myſtery of; and therefore, without any ceremony, I ſhall deliver what occurs to me with regard to the preſent ſubject. It muſt, I think, be allowed, that if a very limited intelligence, whom we ſhall ſuppoſe utterly unacquainted with the univerſe, were aſſured, that it were the production of a very good, wiſe, and powerful Being, however finite, he would, from his conjectures, form, beforehand, a different notion of it from what we find it to be by experience; nor would he ever imagine, merely from theſe attributes, of the cauſe of which he is informed, that the effect could be ſo full of vice, and miſery, and diſorder, as it appears in this life. Suppoſing now, that this perſon were brought into the world, ſtill aſſured that it was the workmanſhip of ſuch a ſublime and benevolent Being; he might, perhaps, be ſurpriſed at the diſappointment, but would never retract his former belief, if founded

on any very ſolid argument; ſince ſuch a limited intelligence muſt be ſenſible of his own blindneſs and ignorance, and muſt allow that there may be many ſolutions of thoſe phænomena, which will for ever eſcape his comprehenſion. But ſuppoſing, which is the real cauſe with regard to man, that this creature is not antecedently convinced of a ſupreme intelligence, benevolent and powerful, but is left to gather ſuch a belief from the appearances of things; this entirely alters the caſe; nor will he ever find any reaſon for ſuch a concluſion. He may be fully convinced of the narrow limits of his underſtanding; but this will not help him in forming an inference concerning the goodneſs of ſuperior powers, ſince he muſt form that inference from what he knows, not from what he is ignorant of. The more you exaggerate his weakneſs and ignorance, the more diffident you render him, and give him the greater ſuſpicion that ſuch ſubjects are beyond the reach of his faculties. You are obliged, therefore, to reaſon with him merely from the known phænomena, and to drop every arbitrary ſuppoſition or conjecture.

Did I ſhow you a houſe or palace, where there was not one apartment convenient or agreeable; where the windows, doors, fires, paſſages, ſtairs, and the whole œconomy of the building, were the ſource of noiſe, confuſion, fatigue, darkneſs, and the extremes of heat and cold; you would certainly blame the contrivance, without any farther examination. The architect would in vain diſplay his ſubtilty, and prove to you, that if this door or that window were altered, greater ills would enſue. What he ſays may be ſtrictly true: The alteration of one particular, while the other parts of the building remain, may only augment the inconveniences. But ſtill you would aſſert in general, that, if the

the architect had had ſkill and good intentions, he might have formed ſuch a plan of the whole, and might have adjuſted the parts in ſuch a manner, as would have remedied all or moſt of theſe inconveniences. His ignorance, or even your own ignorance, of ſuch a plan, will never convince you of the impoſſibility of it. If you find many inconveniences and deformities in the building, you will always, without entering into any detail, condemn the architect.

In ſhort, I repeat the queſtion: Is the world, conſidered in general, and as it appears to us in this life, different from what a man, or ſuch a limited being, would, beforehand, expect from a very powerful, wiſe, and benevolent Deity? It muſt be ſtrange prejudice to aſſert the contrary. And from thence I conclude, that, however conſiſtent the world may be, allowing certain ſuppoſitions and conjectures, with the idea of ſuch a Deity, it can never afford us an inference concerning his exiſtence. The conſiſtence is not abſolutely denied, only the inference. Conjectures, eſpecially where infinity is excluded from the divine attributes, may, perhaps, be ſufficient to prove a conſiſtence; but can never be foundations for any inference.

There ſeem to be four circumſtances, on which depend all, or the greateſt part of the ills, that moleſt ſenſible creatures; and it is not impoſſible but all theſe circumſtances may be neceſſary and unavoidable. We know ſo little beyond common life, or even of common life, that, with regard to the œconomy of a univerſe, there is no conjecture, however wild, which may not be juſt; nor any one, however plauſible, which may not be erroneous. All that belongs to human underſtanding, in this deep ignorance and obſcurity, is to be ſceptical, or at leaſt cautious; and not to admit of any

hypotheſis whatever: much leſs, of any which is ſupported by no appearance of probability. Now this I aſſert to be the caſe with regard to all the cauſes of evil, and the circumſtances on which it depends. None of them appear, to human reaſon, in the leaſt degree, neceſſary or unavoidable; nor can we ſuppoſe them ſuch, without the utmoſt licenſe of imagination.

The firſt circumſtance which introduces evil, is that contrivance or œconomy of the animal creation, by which pains, as well as pleaſures, are employed to excite all creatures to action, and make them vigilant in the great work of ſelf-preſervation. Now pleaſure alone, in its various degrees, ſeems to human underſtanding ſufficient for this purpoſe. All animals might be conſtantly in a ſtate of enjoyment; but when urged by any of the neceſſities of nature, ſuch as thirſt, hunger, wearineſs; inſtead of pain, they might feel a diminution of pleaſure, by which they might be prompted to ſeek that object which is neceſſary to their ſubſiſtence. Men purſue pleaſure as eagerly as they avoid pain; at leaſt, might have been ſo conſtituted. It ſeems, therefore, plainly poſſible to carry on the buſineſs of life without any pain. Why then is any animal ever rendered ſuſceptible of ſuch a ſenſation? If animals can be free from it an hour, they might enjoy a perpetual exemption from it; and it required as particular a contrivance of their organs to produce that feeling, as to endow them with ſight, hearing, or any of the ſenſes. Shall we conjecture, that ſuch a contrivance was neceſſary, without any appearance of reaſon? and ſhall we build on that conjecture, as on the moſt certain truth?

But a capacity of pain would not alone produce pain, were it not for the ſecond circumſtance, viz. the conducting

ducting of the world by general laws; and this ſeems nowiſe neceſſary to a very perfect Being. It is true, if every thing were conducted by particular volitions, the courſe of nature would be perpetually broken, and no man could employ his reaſon in the conduct of life. But might not other particular volitions remedy this inconvenience? In ſhort, might not the Deity exterminate all ill, wherever it were to be found; and produce all good, without any preparation or long progreſs of cauſes and effects?

Beſides, we muſt conſider, that, according to the preſent œconomy of the world, the courſe of Nature, though ſuppoſed exactly regular, yet to us appears not ſo; and many events are uncertain, and many diſappoint our expectations. Health and ſickneſs, calm and tempeſt, with an infinite number of other accidents, whoſe cauſes are unknown and variable, have a great influence both on the fortunes of particular perſons and on the proſperity of public ſocieties: and indeed all human life, in a manner, depends on ſuch accidents. A being, therefore, who knows the ſecret ſprings of the univerſe, might eaſily, by particular volitions, turn all theſe accidents to the good of mankind, and render the whole world happy, without diſcovering himſelf in any operation. A fleet, whoſe purpoſes were ſalutary to ſociety, might always meet with a fair wind: Good princes enjoy ſound health and long life: Perſons born to power and authority, be framed with good tempers and virtuous diſpoſitions. A few ſuch events as theſe, regularly and wiſely conducted, would change the face of the world; and yet would no more ſeem to diſturb the courſe of nature, or confound human conduct, than the preſent œconomy of things, where the cauſes are ſecret, and variable, and compounded.

compounded. Some ſmall touches, given to Caligula's brain in his infancy, might have converted him into a Trajan: one wave, a little higher than the reſt, by burying Cæſar and his fortune in the bottom of the ocean, might have reſtored liberty to a conſiderable part of mankind. There may, for aught we know, be good reaſons, why Providence interpoſes not in this manner; but they are unknown to us: and though the mere ſuppoſition, that ſuch reaſons exiſt, may be ſufficient to ſave the concluſion concerning the divine attributes, yet ſurely it can never be ſufficient to eſtabliſh that concluſion.

If every thing in the univerſe be conducted by general laws, and if animals be rendered ſuſceptible of pain, it ſcarcely ſeems poſſible, but ſome ill muſt ariſe in the various ſhocks of matter, and the various concurrence and oppoſition of general laws: But this ill would be very rare, were it not for the third circumſtance, which I propoſed to mention, viz. the great frugality with which all powers and faculties are diſtributed to every particular being. So well adjuſted are the organs and capacities of all animals, and ſo well fitted to their preſervation, that, as far as hiſtory or tradition reaches, there appears not to be any ſingle ſpecies which has yet been extinguiſhed in the univerſe. Every animal has the requiſite endowments; but theſe endowments are beſtowed with ſo ſcrupulous an œconomy, that any conſiderable diminution muſt entirely deſtroy the creature. Wherever one power is increaſed, there is a proportional abatement in the others. Animals which excel in ſwiftneſs, are commonly defective in force. Thoſe which poſſeſs both, are either imperfect in ſome of their ſenſes, or are oppreſſed with the moſt craving wants. The human ſpecies, whoſe

whoſe chief excellency is reaſon and ſagacity, is of all others the moſt neceſſitous, and the moſt deficient in bodily advantages; without clothes, without arms, without food, without lodging, without any convenience of life, except what they owe to their own ſkill and induſtry. In ſhort, Nature ſeems to have formed an exact calculation of the neceſſities of her creatures, and, like a rigid maſter, has afforded them little more powers or endowments than what are ſtrictly ſufficient to ſupply thoſe neceſſities. An indulgent parent would have beſtowed a large ſtock, in order to guard againſt accidents, and ſecure the happineſs and welfare of the creature in the moſt unfortunate concurrence of circumſtances. Every courſe of life would not have been ſo ſurrounded with precipices, that the leaſt departure from the true path, by miſtake or neceſſity, muſt involve us in miſery and ruin. Some reſerve, ſome fund, would have been provided to enſure happineſs; nor would the powers and the neceſſities have been adjuſted with ſo rigid an œconomy. The Author of nature is inconceivably powerful: his force is ſuppoſed great, if not altogether inexhauſtible: nor is there any reaſon, as far as we can judge, to make him obſerve this ſtrict frugality in his dealings with his creatures. It would have been better, were his power extremely limited, to have created fewer animals, and to have endowed theſe with more faculties for their happineſs and preſervation. A builder is never eſteemed prudent, who undertakes a plan beyond what his ſtock will enable him to finiſh.

In order to cure moſt of the ills of human life, I require not that man ſhould have the wings of the eagle, the ſwiftneſs of the ſtag, the force of the ox, the arms of the lion, the ſcales of the crocodile or rhinoceros;

ceros; much leſs do I demand the ſagacity of an angel or cherubim. I am contented to take an increaſe in one ſingle power or faculty of his ſoul. Let him be endowed with a greater propenſity to induſtry and labour; a more vigorous ſpring and activity of mind; a more conſtant bent to buſineſs and application. Let the whole ſpecies poſſeſs naturally an equal diligence with that which many individuals are able to attain by habit and reflection; and the moſt beneficial conſequences, without any allay of ill, is the immediate and neceſſary reſult of this endowment. Almoſt all the moral, as well as natural evils of human life ariſe from idleneſs; and were our ſpecies, by the original conſtitution of their frame, exempt from this vice or infirmity, the perfect cultivation of land, the improvement of arts and manufactures, the exact execution of every office and duty, immediately follow; and men at once may fully reach that ſtate of ſociety, which is ſo imperfectly attained by the beſt-regulated government. But as induſtry is a power, and the moſt valuable of any, Nature ſeems determined, ſuitably to her uſual maxims, to beſtow it on men with a very ſparing hand; and rather to puniſh him ſeverely for his deficiency in it, than to reward him for his attainments. She has ſo contrived his frame, that nothing but the moſt violent neceſſity can oblige him to labour; and ſhe employs all his other wants to overcome, at leaſt in part, the want of diligence, and to endow him with ſome ſhare of a faculty, of which ſhe has thought fit naturally to bereave him. Here our demands may be allowed very humble, and therefore the more reaſonable. If we required the endowments of ſuperior penetration and judgment, of a more delicate taſte of beauty, of a nicer ſenſibility to benevolence and friend-

ſhip;

ſhip; we might be told, that we impiouſly pretend to break the order of Nature; that we want to exalt ourſelves into a higher rank of being; that the preſents which we require, not being ſuitable to our ſtate and condition, would only be pernicious to us. But it is hard; I dare to repeat it, it is hard, that being placed in a world ſo full of wants and neceſſities, where almoſt every being and element is either our foe, or refuſes its aſſiſtance—we ſhould alſo have our own temper to ſtruggle with, and ſhould be deprived of that faculty which can alone fence againſt theſe multiplied evils.

The fourth circumſtance, whence ariſes the miſery and ill of the univerſe, is the inaccurate workmanſhip of all the ſprings and principles of the great machine of nature. It muſt be acknowledged, that there are few parts of the univerſe which ſeem not to ſerve ſome purpoſe, and whoſe removal would not produce a viſible defect and diſorder in the whole. The parts hang all together; nor can one be touched without affecting the reſt, in a greater or leſs degree. But at the ſame time, it muſt be obſerved, that none of theſe parts or principles, however uſeful, are ſo accurately adjuſted, as to keep preciſely within thoſe bounds in which their utility conſiſts; but they are all of them apt, on every occaſion, to run into the one extreme or the other. One would imagine, that this grand production had not received the laſt hand of the maker; ſo little finiſhed is every part, and ſo coarſe are the ſtrokes with which it is executed. Thus, the winds are requiſite to convey the vapours along the ſurface of the globe, and to aſſiſt men in navigation: but how oft, riſing up to tempeſts and hurricanes, do they become pernicious? Rains are neceſſary to nouriſh all the plants

plants and animals of the earth: but how often are they defective? how often exceſſive? Heat is requiſite to all life and vegetation; but is not always found in the due proportion. On the mixture and ſecretion of the humours and juices of the body depend the health and proſperity of the animal: but the parts perform not regularly their proper function. What more uſeful than all the paſſions of the mind, ambition, vanity, love, anger? But how oft do they break their bounds, and cauſe the greateſt convulſions in ſociety? There is nothing ſo advantageous in the univerſe, but what frequently becomes pernicious, by its exceſs or defect? nor has Nature guarded, with the requiſite accuracy, againſt all diſorder or confuſion. The irregularity is never, perhaps, ſo great as to deſtroy any ſpecies; but is often ſufficient to involve the individuals in ruin and miſery.

On the concurrence, then, of theſe four circumſtances, does all or the greateſt part of natural evil depend. Were all living creatures incapable of pain, or were the world adminiſtered by particular volitions, evil never could have found acceſs into the univerſe: and were animals endowed with a large ſtock of powers and faculties, beyond what ſtrict neceſſity requires; or were the ſeveral ſprings and principles of the univerſe ſo accurately framed as to preſerve always the juſt temperament and medium; there muſt have been very little ill in compariſon of what we feel at preſent. What then ſhall we pronounce on this occaſion? Shall we ſay, that theſe circumſtances are not neceſſary, and that they might eaſily have been altered in the contrivance of the univerſe? This deciſion ſeems too preſumptuous for creatures ſo blind and ignorant. Let us be more modeſt in our concluſions. Let us allow, that,

that, if the goodneſs of the Deity (I mean a goodneſs like the human) could be eſtabliſhed on any tolerable reaſons *à priori*, theſe phænomena, however untoward, would not be ſufficient to ſubvert that principle; but might eaſily, in ſome unknown manner, be reconcileable to it. But let us ſtill aſſert, that as this goodneſs is not antecedently eſtabliſhed, but muſt be inferred from the phænomena, there can be no grounds for ſuch an inference, while there are ſo many ills in the univerſe, and while theſe ills might ſo eaſily have been remedied, as far as human underſtanding can be allowed to judge on ſuch a ſubject. I am Sceptic enough to allow, that the bad appearances, notwithſtanding all my reaſonings, may be compatible with ſuch attributes as you ſuppoſe: But ſurely they can never prove theſe attributes. Such a concluſion cannot reſult from Scepticiſm; but muſt ariſe from the phænomena, and from our confidence in the reaſonings which we deduce from theſe phænomena.

Look round this univerſe. What an immenſe profuſion of beings, animated and organized, ſenſible and active! You admire this prodigious variety and fecundity. But, inſpect a little more narrowly theſe living exiſtences, the only beings worth regarding, How hoſtile and deſtructive to each other! How inſufficient all of them for their own happineſs! How contemptible or odious to the ſpectator! The whole preſents nothing but the idea of a blind Nature, impregnated by a great vivifying principle, and pouring forth from her lap, without diſcernment or parental care, her maimed and abortive children.

Here the Manichæan ſyſtem occurs as a proper hypotheſis to ſolve the difficulty: and no doubt, in ſome reſpects, it is very ſpecious, and has more probability than

than the common hypotheſis, by giving a plauſible account of the ſtrange mixture of good and ill which appears in life. But if we conſider, on the other hand, the perfect uniformity and agreement of the parts of the univerſe, we ſhall not diſcover in it any marks of the combat of a malevolent with a benevolent being. There is indeed an oppoſition of pains and pleaſures in the feelings of ſenſible creatures: but are not all the operations of Nature carried on by an oppoſition of principles, of hot and cold, moiſt and dry, light and heavy? The true concluſion is, that the original Source of all things is entirely indifferent to all theſe principles; and has no more regard to good above ill, than to heat above cold, or to drought above moiſture, or to light above heavy.

There may four hypotheſes be framed concerning the firſt cauſes of the univerſe: that they are endowed with perfect goodneſs; that they have perfect malice; that they are oppoſite, and have both goodneſs and malice; that they have neither goodneſs nor malice. Mixt phænomena can never prove the two former unmixt principles. And the uniformity and ſteadineſs of general laws ſeem to oppoſe the third. The fourth, therefore, ſeems by far the moſt probable.

What I have ſaid concerning natural evil, will apply to moral, with little or no variation; and we have no more reaſon to infer, that the rectitude of the Supreme Being reſembles human rectitude, than that his benevolence reſembles the human. Nay, it will be thought, that we have ſtill greater cauſe to exclude from him moral ſentiments, ſuch as we feel them; ſince moral evil, in the opinion of many, is much more predominant above moral good, than natural evil above natural good.

But

But even though this ſhould not be allowed; and though the virtue, which is in mankind, ſhould be acknowledged much ſuperior to the vice; yet ſo long as there is any vice at all in the univerſe, it will very much puzzle you Anthropomorphites how to account for it. You muſt aſſign a cauſe for it, without having recourſe to the firſt Cauſe. But as every effect muſt have a cauſe, and that cauſe another; you muſt either carry on the progreſſion *in infinitum*, or reſt on that original Principle, who is the ultimate cauſe of all things.....

Hold! Hold! cried Demea: Whither does your imagination hurry you? I join in alliance with you, in order to prove the incomprehenſible nature of the Divine Being, and refute the principles of Cleanthes, who would meaſure every thing by a human rule and ſtandard. But I now find you running into all the topics of the greateſt libertines and infidels; and betraying that holy cauſe which you ſeemingly eſpouſed. Are you ſecretly, then, a more dangerous enemy than Cleanthes himſelf?

And are you ſo late in perceiving it? replied Cleanthes. Believe me, Demea, your friend Philo, from the beginning, has been amuſing himſelf at both our expence; and it muſt be confeſſed, that the injudicious reaſoning of our vulgar theology has given him but too juſt a handle of ridicule. The total infirmity of human reaſon, the abſolute incomprehenſibility of the Divine Nature, the great and univerſal miſery, and ſtill greater wickedneſs of men; theſe are ſtrange topics, ſurely, to be ſo fondly cheriſhed by orthodox divines and doctors. In ages of ſtupidity and ignorance, indeed, theſe principles may ſafely be eſpouſed; and, perhaps, no views of things are more proper to

promote ſuperſtition, than ſuch as encourage the blind amazement, the diffidence, and melancholy of mankind. But at preſent.....

Blame not ſo much, interpoſed Philo, the ignorance of theſe reverend gentlemen. They know how to change their ſtyle with the times. Formerly it was a moſt popular theological topic to maintain, that human life was vanity and miſery, and to exaggerate all the ills and pains which are incident to men: But of late years, divines, we find, begin to retract this poſition; and maintain, though ſtill with ſome heſitation, that there are more goods than evils, more pleaſures than pains, even in this life. When religion ſtood entirely upon temper and education, it was thought proper to encourage melancholy; as, indeed, mankind never have recourſe to ſuperior powers ſo readily as in that diſpoſition. But as men have now learned to form principles, and to draw conſequences, it is neceſſary to change the batteries, and to make uſe of ſuch arguments as will endure at leaſt ſome ſcrutiny and examination. This variation is the ſame (and from the ſame cauſes) with that which I formerly remarked with regard to Scepticiſm.

Thus Philo continued to the laſt his ſpirit of oppoſition, and his cenſure of eſtabliſhed opinions. But I could obſerve, that Demea did not at all reliſh the latter part of the diſcourſe; and he took occaſion ſoon after, on ſome pretence or other, to leave the company.

PART

PART XII.

AFTER Demea's departure, Cleanthes and Philo continued the converſation in the following manner. Our friend, I am afraid, ſaid Cleanthes, will have little inclination to revive this topic of diſcourſe while you are in company; and to tell truth, Philo, I ſhould rather wiſh to reaſon with either of you apart, on a ſubject ſo ſublime and intereſting. Your ſpirit of controverſy, joined to your abhorrence of vulgar ſuperſtition, carries you ſtrange lengths when engaged in an argument; and there is nothing ſo ſacred and venerable, even in your own eyes, which you ſpare on that occaſion.

I muſt confeſs, replied Philo, that I am leſs cautious on the ſubject of Natural Religion than on any other; both becauſe I know that I can never, on that head, corrupt the principles of any man of common ſenſe; and becauſe no one, I am confident, in whoſe eyes I appear a man of common ſenſe, will ever miſtake my intentions. You, in particular, Cleanthes, with whom I live in unreſerved intimacy; you are ſenſible, that, notwithſtanding the freedom of my converſation, and my love of ſingular arguments, no one has a deeper ſenſe of religion impreſſed on his mind, or pays more profound adoration to the Divine Being, as he diſcovers himſelf to reaſon, in the inexplicable contrivance and artifice of Nature. A purpoſe, an intention, a deſign, ſtrikes every where the moſt careleſs, the

moſt ſtupid thinker; and no man can be ſo hardened in abſurd ſyſtems, as at all times to reject it. "That "Nature does nothing in vain," is a maxim eſtabliſhed in all the ſchools, merely from the contemplation of the works of Nature, without any religious purpoſe; and, from a firm conviction of its truth, an anatomiſt, who had obſerved a new organ or canal, would never be ſatisfied till he had alſo diſcovered its uſe and intention. One great foundation of the Copernican ſyſtem is the maxim, "That nature acts by "the ſimpleſt methods, and chooſes the moſt proper "means to any end;" and aſtronomers often, without thinking of it, lay this ſtrong foundation of piety and religion. The ſame thing is obſervable in other parts of philoſophy: And thus all the ſciences almoſt lead us inſenſibly to acknowledge a firſt intelligent Author; and their authority is often ſo much the greater, as they do not directly profeſs that intention.

It is with pleaſure I hear Galen reaſon concerning the ſtructure of the human body. The anatomy of a man, ſays he *, diſcovers above 600 different muſcles; and whoever duly conſiders theſe, will find, that in each of them Nature muſt have adjuſted at leaſt ten different circumſtances, in order to attain the end which ſhe propoſed; proper figure, juſt magnitude, right diſpoſition of the ſeveral ends, upper and lower poſition of the whole, the due inſertion of the ſeveral nerves, veins, and arteries: So that, in the muſcles alone, above 6000 ſeveral views and intentions muſt have been formed and executed. The bones he calculates to be 284: The diſtinct purpoſes, aimed at in the ſtructure of each, above forty. What a prodigious diſplay of artifice, even in theſe ſimple and homogeneous

* De formatione fœtûs.

ous parts? But if we conſider the ſkin, ligaments, veſſels, glandules, humours, the ſeveral limbs and members of the body; how muſt our aſtoniſhment riſe upon us, in proportion to the number and intricacy of the parts ſo artificially adjuſted? The farther we advance in theſe reſearches, we diſcover new ſcenes of art and wiſdom: But deſcry ſtill, at a diſtance, farther ſcenes beyond our reach; in the fine internal ſtructure of the parts, in the œconomy of the brain, in the fabric of the ſeminal veſſels. All theſe artifices are repeated in every different ſpecies of animal, with wonderful variety, and with exact propriety, ſuited to the different intentions of Nature in framing each ſpecies. And if the infidelity of Galen, even when theſe natural ſciences were ſtill imperfect, could not withſtand ſuch ſtriking appearances; to what pitch of pertinacious obſtinacy muſt a philoſopher in this age have attained, who can now doubt of a Supreme Intelligence?

Could I meet with one of this ſpecies (who, I thank God, are very rare), I would aſk him, Suppoſing there were a God, who did not diſcover himſelf immediately to our ſenſes; were it poſſible for him to give ſtronger proofs of his exiſtence, than what appear on the whole face of Nature? What indeed could ſuch a Divine Being do, but copy the preſent œconomy of things; render many of his artifices ſo plain, that no ſtupidity could miſtake them; afford glimpſes of ſtill greater artifices, which demonſtrate his prodigious ſuperiority above our narrow apprehenſions; and conceal altogether a great many from ſuch imperfect creatures? Now, according to all rules of juſt reaſoning, every fact muſt paſs for undiſputed, when it is ſupported by all the arguments which its nature admits of; even though theſe arguments be not, in

themſelves, very numerous or forcible: How much more, in the preſent caſe, where no human imagination can compute their number, and no underſtanding eſtimate their cogency?

I ſhall farther add, ſaid Cleanthes, to what you have ſo well urged, that one great advantage of the principle of Theiſm is, that it is the only ſyſtem of coſmogony which can be rendered intelligible and complete, and yet can throughout preſerve a ſtrong analogy to what we every day ſee and experience in the world. The compariſon of the univerſe to a machine of human contrivance is ſo obvious and natural, and is juſtified by ſo many inſtances of order and deſign in nature, that it muſt immediately ſtrike all unprejudiced apprehenſions, and procure univerſal approbation. Whoever attempts to weaken this theory, cannot pretend to ſucceed by eſtabliſhing in its place any other that is preciſe and determinate: It is ſufficient for him, if he ſtart doubts and difficulties; and by remote and abſtract views of things, reach that ſuſpenſe of judgment, which is here the utmoſt boundary of his wiſhes. But, beſides that this ſtate of mind is in itſelf unſatisfactory, it can never be ſteadily maintained againſt ſuch ſtriking appearances as continually engage us into the religious hypotheſis. A falſe, abſurd ſyſtem, human nature, from the force of prejudice, is capable of adhering to with obſtinacy and perſeverance: But no ſyſtem at all, in oppoſition to a theory ſupported by ſtrong and obvious reaſon, by natural propenſity, and by early education, I think it abſolutely impoſſible to maintain or defend.

So little, replied Philo, do I eſteem this ſuſpenſe of judgment in the preſent caſe to be poſſible, that I am apt to ſuſpect there enters ſomewhat of a diſpute of words

words into this controverſy, more than is uſually imagined. That the works of Nature bear a great analogy to the productions of art, is evident; and according to all the rules of good reaſoning, we ought to infer, if we argue at all concerning them, that their cauſes have a proportional analogy. But as there are alſo conſiderable differences, we have reaſon to ſuppoſe a proportional difference in the cauſes; and in particular ought to attribute a much higher degree of power and energy to the Supreme Cauſe than any we have ever obſerved in mankind. Here then the exiſtence of a DEITY is plainly aſcertained by reaſon: and if we make it a queſtion, whether, on account of theſe analogies, we can properly call him a Mind or Intelligence, notwithſtanding the vaſt difference which may reaſonably be ſuppoſed between him and human minds; what is this but a mere verbal controverſy? No man can deny the analogies between the effects: To reſtrain ourſelves from inquiring concerning the cauſes, is ſcarcely poſſible: From this inquiry, the legitimate concluſion is, that the cauſes have alſo an analogy: And if we are not contented with calling the firſt and ſupreme cauſe a GOD or DEITY, but deſire to vary the expreſſion; what can we call him but MIND or THOUGHT, to which he is juſtly ſuppoſed to bear a conſiderable reſemblance?

All men of ſound reaſon are diſguſted with verbal diſputes, which abound ſo much in philoſophical and theological inquiries; and it is found, that the only remedy for this abuſe muſt ariſe from clear definitions, from the preciſion of thoſe ideas which enter into any argument, and from the ſtrict and uniform uſe of thoſe terms which are employ-

ed. But there is a ſpecies of controverſy, which, from the very nature of language and of human ideas, is involved in perpetual ambiguity, and can never, by any precaution or any definitions, be able to reach a reaſonable certainty or preciſion. Theſe are the controverſies concerning the degrees of any quality or circumſtance. Men may argue to all eternity, whether Hannibal be a great, or a very great, or a ſuperlatively great man; what degree of beauty Cleopatra poſſeſſed; what epithet of praiſe Livy or Thucydides is entitled to; without bringing the controverſy to any determination. The diſputants may here agree in their ſenſe, and differ in the terms, or *vice verſa*; yet never be able to define their terms, ſo as to enter into each other's meaning: Becauſe the degrees of theſe qualities are not, like quantity or number, ſuſceptible of any exact menſuration, which may be the ſtandard in the controverſy. That the diſpute concerning Theiſm is of this nature, and conſequently is merely verbal, or perhaps, if poſſible, ſtill more incurably ambiguous, will appear upon the ſlighteſt inquiry. I aſk the Theiſt, if he does not allow, that there is a great and immeaſureable, becauſe incomprehenſible, difference between the Human and the Divine mind? The more pious he is, the more readily will he aſſent to the affirmative, and the more will he be diſpoſed to magnify the difference: He will even aſſert, that the difference is of a nature which cannot be too much magnified. I next turn to the Atheiſt, who, I aſſert, is only nominally ſo, and can never poſſibly be in earneſt; and I aſk him, whether, from the coherence and apparent ſympathy in all the parts of this world, there be not a certain degree of analogy among all the operations of Nature, in every ſituation and in every

age?

age? whether the rotting of a turnip, the generation of an animal, and the ſtructure of human thought, be not energies that probably bear ſome remote analogy to each other? It is impoſſible he can deny it: He will readily acknowledge it. Having obtained this conceſſion, I puſh him ſtill farther in his retreat; and I aſk him, if it be not probable, that the principle which firſt arranged, and ſtill maintains, order in this univerſe, bears not alſo ſome remote inconceivable analogy to the other operations of Nature, and among the reſt to the œconomy of human mind and thought? However reluctant, he muſt give his aſſent. Where, then, cry I to both theſe antagoniſts, is the ſubject of your diſpute? The Theiſt allows, that the original intelligence is very different from human reaſon: The Atheiſt allows, that the original principle of order bears ſome remote analogy to it. Will you quarrel, Gentlemen, about the degrees, and enter into a controverſy, which admits not of any preciſe meaning, nor conſequently of any determination? If you ſhould be ſo obſtinate, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed to find you inſenſibly change ſides; while the Theiſt, on the one hand, exaggerates the diſſimilarity between the Supreme Being, and frail, imperfect, variable, fleeting, and mortal creatures; and the Atheiſt, on the other, magnifies the analogy among all the operations of Nature, in every period, every ſituation, and every poſition. Conſider, then, where the real point of controverſy lies; and if you cannot lay aſide your diſputes, endeavour at leaſt to cure yourſelves of your animoſity.

And here I muſt alſo acknowledge, Cleanthes, that as the works of Nature have a much greater analogy to the effects of our art and contrivance, than to thoſe of

of our benevolence and juſtice; we have reaſon to infer, that the natural attributes of the Deity have a greater reſemblance to thoſe of men, than his moral have to human virtues. But what is the conſequence? Nothing but this, that the moral qualities of man are more defective in their kind than his natural abilities. For as the Supreme Being is allowed to be abſolutely and entirely perfect, whatever differs moſt from him, departs the fartheſt from the ſupreme ſtandard of rectitude and perfection *.

Theſe, Cleanthes, are my unfeigned ſentiments on this ſubject; and theſe ſentiments, you know, I have ever cheriſhed and maintained. But in proportion to my veneration for true religion, is my abhorrence of vulgar ſuperſtitions; and I indulge a peculiar pleaſure, I confeſs, in puſhing ſuch principles, ſometimes into abſurdity, ſometimes into impiety. And you are ſenſible, that all bigots, notwithſtanding their great averſion to the latter above the former, are commonly equally guilty of both.

My

* It ſeems evident, that the diſpute between the Sceptics and Dogmatiſts is entirely verbal; or at leaſt regards only the degrees of doubt and aſſurance, which we ought to indulge with regard to all reaſoning: And ſuch diſputes are commonly, at the bottom, verbal, and admit not of any preciſe determination. No philoſophical Dogmatiſt denies, that there are difficulties both with regard to the ſenſes, and to all ſcience; and that theſe difficulties are, in a regular, logical method, abſolutely inſolvable. No Sceptic denies that we ly under an abſolute neceſſity, notwithſtanding theſe difficulties, of thinking, and believing, and reaſoning, with regard to all kinds of ſubjects, and even of frequently aſſenting with confidence and ſecurity. The only difference, then, between theſe ſects, if they merit that name, is, that the Sceptic, from habit, caprice, or inclination, inſiſts moſt on the difficulties; the Dogmatiſt, for like reaſons, on the neceſſity.

My inclination, replied Cleanthes, lies, I own, a contrary way. Religion, however corrupted, is ſtill better than no religion at all. The doctrine of a future ſtate is ſo ſtrong and neceſſary a ſecurity to morals, that we never ought to abandon or neglect it. For if finite and temporary rewards and puniſhments have ſo great an effect, as we daily find; how much greater muſt be expected from ſuch as are infinite and eternal?

How happens it then, ſaid Philo, if vulgar ſuperſtition be ſo ſalutary to ſociety, that all hiſtory abounds ſo much with accounts of its pernicious conſequences on public affairs? Factions, civil wars, perſecutions, ſubverſions of government, oppreſſion, ſlavery, theſe are the diſmal conſequences which always attend its prevalency over the minds of men. If the religious ſpirit be ever mentioned in any hiſtorical narration, we are ſure to meet afterwards with a detail of the miſeries which attend it. And no period of time can be happier or more proſperous than thoſe in which it is never regarded or heard of.

The reaſon of this obſervation, replied Cleanthes, is obvious. The proper office of religion is to regulate the heart of men, humanize their conduct, infuſe the ſpirit of temperance, order, and obedience; and as its operation is ſilent, and only enforces the motives of morality and juſtice, it is in danger of being overlooked, and confounded with theſe other motives. When it diſtinguiſhes itſelf, and acts as a ſeparate principle over men, it has departed from its proper ſphere, and has become only a cover to faction and ambition.

And ſo will all religion, ſaid Philo, except the philoſophical and rational kind. Your reaſonings are more

more eaſily eluded than my facts. The inference is not juſt, becauſe finite and temporary rewards and puniſhments have ſo great influence, that therefore ſuch as are infinite and eternal muſt have ſo much greater. Conſider, I beſeech you, the attachment which we have to preſent things, and the little concern which we diſcover for objects ſo remote and uncertain. When divines are declaiming againſt the common behaviour and conduct of the world, they always repreſent this principle as the ſtrongeſt imaginable (which indeed it is); and deſcribe almoſt all human kind as lying under the influence of it, and ſunk into the deepeſt lethargy and unconcern about their religious intereſts. Yet theſe ſame divines, when they refute their ſpeculative antagoniſts, ſuppoſe the motives of religion to be ſo powerful, that, without them, it were impoſſible for civil ſociety to ſubſiſt; nor are they aſhamed of ſo palpable a contradiction. It is certain, from experience, that the ſmalleſt grain of natural honeſty and benevolence has more effect on mens conduct, than the moſt pompous views ſuggeſted by theological theories and ſyſtems. A man's natural inclination works inceſſantly upon him; it is for ever preſent to the mind; and mingles itſelf with every view and conſideration: whereas religious motives, where they act at all, operate only by ſtarts and bounds; and it is ſcarcely poſſible for them to become altogther habitual to the mind. The force of the greateſt gravity, ſay the philoſophers, is infinitely ſmall, in compariſon of that of the leaſt impulſe: yet it is certain, that the ſmalleſt gravity will, in the end, prevail above a great impulſe; becauſe no ſtrokes or blows can be repeated with ſuch conſtancy as attraction and gravitation.

Another

Another advantage of inclination: It engages on its ſide all the wit and ingenuity of the mind; and, when ſet in oppoſition to religious principles, ſeeks every method and art of eluding them: In which it is almoſt always ſucceſsful. Who can explain the heart of man, or account for thoſe ſtrange ſalvos and excuſes, with which people ſatisfy themſelves, when they follow their inclinations in oppoſition to their religious duty? This is well underſtood in the world; and none but fools ever repoſe leſs truſt in a man, becauſe they hear, that, from ſtudy and philoſophy, he has entertained ſome ſpeculative doubts with regard to theological ſubjects. And when we have to do with a man, who makes a great profeſſion of religion and devotion; has this any other effect upon ſeveral, who paſs for prudent, than to put them on their guard, leſt they be cheated and deceived by him?

We muſt farther conſider, that philoſophers, who cultivate reaſon and reflection, ſtand leſs in need of ſuch motives to keep them under the reſtraint of morals: and that the vulgar, who alone may need them, are utterly incapable of ſo pure a religion as repreſents the Deity to be pleaſed with nothing but virtue in human behaviour. The recommendations to the Divinity are generally ſuppoſed to be either frivolous obſervances, or rapturous ecſtaſies, or a bigotted credulity. We need not run back into antiquity, or wander into remote regions, to find inſtances of this degeneracy. Amongſt ourſelves, ſome have been guilty of that atrociouſneſs, unknown to the Egyptian and Grecian ſuperſtitions, of declaiming, in expreſs terms, againſt morality; and repreſenting it as a ſure forfeiture of the divine favour, if the leaſt truſt or reliance be laid upon it.

But

But even though ſuperſtition or enthuſiaſm ſhould not put itſelf in direct oppoſition to morality, the very diverting of the attention, the raiſing up a new and frivolous ſpecies of merit, the prepoſterous diſtribution which it makes of praiſe and blame, muſt have the moſt pernicious conſequences, and weaken extremely mens attachment to the natural motives of juſtice and humanity.

Such a principle of action likewiſe, not being any of the familiar motives of human conduct, acts only by intervals on the temper; and muſt be rouſed by continual efforts, in order to render the pious zealot ſatisfied with his own conduct, and make him fulfil his devotional taſk. Many religious exerciſes are entered into with ſeeming fervour, where the heart, at the time, feels cold and languid: A habit of diſſimulation is by degrees contracted; and fraud and falſehood become the predominant principle. Hence the reaſon of that vulgar obſervation, that the higheſt zeal in religion, and the deepeſt hypocriſy, ſo far from being inconſiſtent, are often or commonly united in the ſame individual character.

The bad effects of ſuch habits, even in common life, are eaſily imagined: but where the intereſts of religion are concerned, no morality can be forcible enough to bind the enthuſiaſtic zealot. The ſacredneſs of the cauſe ſanctifies every meaſure which can be made uſe of to promote it.

The ſteady attention alone to ſo important an intereſt as that of eternal ſalvation, is apt to extinguiſh the benevolent affections, and beget a narrow, contracted ſelfiſhneſs. And when ſuch a temper is encouraged, it eaſily eludes all the general precepts of charity and benevolence.

Thus

Thus the motives of vulgar ſuperſtition have no great influence on general conduct; nor is their operation very favourable to morality, in the inſtances where they predominate.

Is there any maxim in politics more certain and infallible, than that both the number and authority of prieſts ſhould be confined within very narrow limits; and that the civil magiſtrate ought, for ever, to keep his faſces and axes from ſuch dangerous hands? But if the ſpirit of popular religion were ſo ſalutary to ſociety, a contrary maxim ought to prevail. The greater number of prieſts, and their greater authority and riches, will always augment the religious ſpirit. And though the prieſts have the guidance of this ſpirit, why may we not expect a ſuperior ſanctity of life, and greater benevolence and moderation, from perſons who are ſet apart for religion, who are continually inculcating it upon others, and who muſt themſelves imbibe a greater ſhare of it? Whence comes it then, that, in fact, the utmoſt a wiſe magiſtrate can propoſe with regard to popular religions, is, as far as poſſible, to make a ſaving game of it, and to prevent their pernicious conſequences with regard to ſociety? Every expedient which he tries for ſo humble a purpoſe is ſurrounded with inconveniences. If he admits only one religion among his ſubjects, he muſt ſacrifice, to an uncertain proſpect of tranquillity, every conſideration of public liberty, ſcience, reaſon, induſtry, and even his own independency. If he gives indulgence to ſeveral ſects, which is the wiſer maxim, he muſt preſerve a very philoſophical indifference to all of them, and carefully reſtrain the pretenſions of the prevailing ſect; otherwiſe he can expect nothing but endleſs diſputes,

putes, quarrels, factions, perſecutions, and civil commotions.

True religion, I allow, has no ſuch pernicious conſequences; but we muſt treat of religion as it has commonly been found in the world; nor have I any thing to do with that ſpeculative tenet of Theiſm; which, as it is a ſpecies of philoſophy, muſt partake of the beneficial influence of that principle, and at the ſame time muſt lie under a like inconvenience, of being always confined to very few perſons.

Oaths are requiſite in all courts of judicature; but it is a queſtion whether their authority ariſes from any popular religion. It is the ſolemnity and importance of the occaſion, the regard to reputation, and the reflecting on the general intereſts of ſociety, which are the chief reſtraints upon mankind. Cuſtom-houſe oaths, and political oaths are but little regarded, even by ſome who pretend to principles of honeſty and religion; and a Quaker's aſſeveration is with us juſtly put upon the ſame footing with the oath of any other perſon. I know, that Polybius * aſcribes the infamy of Greek faith to the prevalency of the Epicurean philoſophy: but I know alſo, that Punic faith had as bad a reputation in ancient times, as Iriſh evidence has in modern; though we cannot account for theſe vulgar obſervations by the ſame reaſon. Not to mention, that Greek faith was infamous before the riſe of the Epicurean philoſophy; and Euripides †, in a paſſage which I ſhall point out to you, has glanced a remarkable ſtroke of ſatire againſt his nation, with regard to this circumſtance.

Take care, Philo, replied Cleanthes; take care; puſh not matters too far: allow not your zeal againſt falſe

* Lib. vi. cap. 54. † Iphigenia in Tauride.

falſe religion to undermine your veneration for the true. Forfeit not this principle, the chief, the only great comfort in life; and our principal ſupport amidſt all the attacks of adverſe fortune. The moſt agreeable reflection, which it is poſſible for human imagination to ſuggeſt, is that of genuine Theiſm, which repreſents us as the workmanſhip of a Being perfectly good, wiſe, and powerful; who created us for happineſs; and who, having implanted in us immeaſurable deſires of good, will prolong our exiſtence to all eternity, and will transfer us into an infinite variety of ſcenes, in order to ſatisfy thoſe deſires, and render our felicity complete and durable. Next to ſuch a Being himſelf (if the compariſon be allowed), the happieſt lot which we can imagine, is that of being under his guardianſhip and protection.

Theſe appearances, ſaid Philo, are moſt engaging and alluring; and with regard to the true philoſopher, they are more than appearances. But it happens here, as in the former caſe, that, with regard to the greater part of mankind, the appearances are deceitful, and that the terrors of religion commonly prevail above its comforts.

It is allowed, that men never have recourſe to devotion ſo readily as when dejected with grief, or depreſſed with ſickneſs. Is not this a proof, that the religious ſpirit is not ſo nearly allied to joy as to ſorrow?

But men, when afflicted, find conſolation in religion, replied Cleanthes. Sometimes, ſaid Philo: but it is natural to imagine, that they will form a notion of thoſe unknown beings, ſuitably to the preſent gloom and melancholy of their temper, when they betake themſelves to the contemplation of them. Accordingly, we find the tremendous images to predominate in

all religions; and we ourſelves, after having employed the moſt exalted expreſſion in our deſcriptions of the Deity, fall into the flatteſt contradiction, in affirming, that the damned are infinitely ſuperior in number to the elect.

I ſhall venture to affirm, that there never was a popular religion, which repreſented the ſtate of departed ſouls in ſuch a light, as would render it eligible for human kind, that there ſhould be ſuch a ſtate. Theſe fine models of religion are the mere product of philoſophy. For as death lies between the eye and the proſpect of futurity, that event is ſo ſhocking to nature, that it muſt throw a gloom on all the regions which lie beyond it; and ſuggeſt to the generality of mankind the idea of Cerberus and Furies; devils, and torrents of fire and brimſtone.

It is true, both fear and hope enter into religion; becauſe both theſe paſſions, at different times, agitate the human mind, and each of them forms a ſpecies of divinity ſuitable to itſelf. But when a man is in a cheerful diſpoſition, he is fit for buſineſs or company, or entertainment of any kind; and he naturally applies himſelf to theſe, and thinks not of religion. When melancholy and dejected, he has nothing to do but brood upon the terrors of the inviſible world, and to plunge himſelf ſtill deeper in affliction. It may indeed happen, that after he has, in this manner, engraved the religious opinions deep into his thought and imagination, there may arrive a change of health or circumſtances, which may reſtore his good-humour, and, raiſing cheerful proſpects of futurity, make him run into the other extreme of joy and triumph. But ſtill it muſt be acknowledged, that, as terror is the primary principle of religion, it is the paſſion which always

ways predominates in it, and admits but of ſhort intervals of pleaſure.

Not to mention, that theſe fits of exceſſive, enthuſiaſtic joy, by exhauſting the ſpirits, always prepare the way for equal fits of ſuperſtitious terror and dejection; nor is there any ſtate of mind ſo happy as the calm and equable. But this ſtate it is impoſſible to ſupport, where a man thinks that he lies in ſuch profound darkneſs and uncertainty, between an eternity of happineſs and an eternity of miſery. No wonder, that ſuch an opinion disjoints the ordinary frame of the mind, and throws it into the utmoſt confuſion. And though that opinion is ſeldom ſo ſteady in its operation as to influence all the actions, yet is it apt to make a conſiderable breach in the temper, and to produce that gloom and melancholy ſo remarkable in all devout people.

It is contrary to common ſenſe to entertain apprehenſions or terrors upon account of any opinion whatſoever, or to imagine that we run any riſk hereafter by the freeſt uſe of our reaſon. Such a ſentiment implies both an abſurdity and an inconſiſtency. It is an abſurdity to believe that the Deity has human paſſions, and one of the loweſt of human paſſions, a reſtleſs appetite for applauſe. It is an inconſiſtency to believe, that, ſince the Deity has this human paſſion, he has not others alſo; and in particular, a diſregard to the opinions of creatures ſo much inferior.

"To know God," ſays Seneca, "is to worſhip him." All other worſhip is indeed abſurd, ſuperſtitious, and even impious. It degrades him to the low condition of mankind, who are delighted with intreaty, ſolicitation, preſents, and flattery. Yet is this impiety the ſmalleſt of which ſuperſtition is guilty. Commonly, it depreſſes the Deity far below the condition of man-

kind; and repreſents him as a capricious dæmon, who exerciſes his power without reaſon, and without humanity! And were that Divine Being diſpoſed to be offended at the vices and follies of ſilly mortals, who are his own workmanſhip, ill would it ſurely fare with the votaries of moſt popular ſuperſtitions. Nor would any of human race merit his favour, but a very few, the philoſophical Theiſts, who entertain, or rather indeed endeavour to entertain, ſuitable notions of his divine perfections: As the only perſons, entitled to his compaſſion and indulgence, would be the philoſophical Sceptics, a ſect almoſt equally rare; who, from a natural diffidence of their own capacity, ſuſpend, or endeavour to ſuſpend, all judgment with regard to ſuch ſublime and ſuch extraordinary ſubjects.

If the whole of Natural Theology, as ſome people ſeem to maintain, reſolves itſelf into one ſimple, though ſomewhat ambiguous, at leaſt undefined propoſition, "That the cauſe or cauſes of order in the univerſe "probably bear ſome remote analogy to human intel-"ligence:" If this propoſition be not capable of extenſion, variation, or more particular explication; if it affords no inference that affects human life, or can be the ſource of any action or forbearance; and if the analogy, imperfect as it is, can be carried no farther than to the human intelligence, and cannot be transferred, with any appearance of probability, to the other qualities of the mind: If this really be the caſe, what can the moſt inquiſitive, contemplative, and religious man do more than give a plain, philoſophical aſſent to the propoſition, as often as it occurs; and believe that the arguments on which it is eſtabliſhed, exceed the objections which lie againſt it? Some aſtoniſhment, indeed, will naturally ariſe from the greatneſs of the ſubject;

ſubject; ſome melancholy from its obſcurity; ſome contempt of human reaſon, that it can give no ſolution more ſatisfactory with regard to ſo extraordinary and magnificent a queſtion. But believe me, Cleanthes, the moſt natural ſentiment, which a well-diſpoſed mind will feel on this occaſion, is a longing deſire and expectation, that heaven would be pleaſed to diſſipate, at leaſt alleviate, this profound ignorance, by affording ſome more particular revelation to mankind, and making diſcoveries of the nature, attributes, and operations of the divine object of our faith. A perſon, ſeaſoned with a juſt ſenſe of the imperfections of natural reaſon, will fly to revealed truth with the greateſt avidity: while the haughty dogmatiſt, perſuaded that he can erect a complete ſyſtem of Theology by the mere help of philoſophy, diſdains any farther aid, and rejects this adventitious inſtructor. To be a philoſophical Sceptic, is, in a man of letters, the firſt and moſt eſſential ſtep towards being a ſound, believing Chriſtian; a propoſition which I would willingly recommend to the attention of Pamphilus: And I hope Cleanthes will forgive me for interpoſing ſo far in the education and inſtruction of his pupil.

Cleanthes and Philo purſued not this converſation much farther: and as nothing ever made greater impreſſion on me than all the reaſonings of that day; ſo, I confeſs, that upon a ſerious review of the whole, I cannot but think, that Philo's principles are more probable than Demea's; but that thoſe of Cleanthes approach ſtill nearer to the truth.

NOTES

TO THE

SECOND VOLUME.

NOTE [A], p. 35.

IT is probable that no more was meant by thoſe who denied innate ideas, than that all ideas were copies of our impreſſions; though it muſt be confeſſed, that the terms which they employed were not choſen with ſuch caution, nor ſo exactly defined, as to prevent all miſtakes about their doctrine. For what is meant by *innate?* If innate be equivalent to natural, then all the perceptions and ideas of the mind muſt be allowed to be innate or natural, in whatever ſenſe we take the latter word, whether in oppoſition to what is uncommon, artificial, or miraculous. If by innate be meant cotemporary to our birth, the diſpute ſeems to be frivolous; nor is it worth while to inquire at what time thinking begins, whether before, at, or after, our birth. Again, the word *idea* ſeems to be commonly taken in a very looſe ſenſe by Locke and others; as ſtanding for any of our perceptions, our ſenſations and paſſions, as well as thoughts. Now in this ſenſe, I ſhould deſire to know, what can be meant by aſſerting, that ſelf-love, or reſentment of injuries, or the paſſion between the ſexes, is not innate?

But admitting theſe terms, *impreſſions* and *ideas*, in the ſenſe above explained, and underſtanding by *innate*, what is original, or copied from no precedent perception; then may we aſſert, that all our impreſſions are innate, and our ideas not innate.

To be ingenuous, I muſt own it to be my opinion, that Locke was betrayed into this queſtion by the ſchoolmen; who, making uſe of undefined terms, draw out their diſputes to a tedious length, without ever touching the point in queſtion. A like ambiguity and circumlocution ſeem to run through that philoſopher's reaſonings on this as well as moſt other ſubjects.

NOTE [B], p. 58.

NOTHING is more uſual than for writers, even on *moral*, *political*, or *phyſical* ſubjects, to diſtinguiſh between *reaſon* and *experience*, and to ſuppoſe, that theſe ſpecies of argumentation are entirely different from each other. The former are taken for the mere reſult of our intellectual faculties, which, by conſidering *à priori* the nature of things, and examining the effects that muſt follow from their operation, eſtabliſh particular principles of ſcience and philoſophy. The latter are ſuppoſed to be derived entirely from ſenſe and obſervation; by which we learn what has actually reſulted from the operation of particular objects, and are thence able to infer, what will, for the future, reſult from them. Thus, for inſtance, the limitations and reſtraints of civil government, and a legal conſtitution, may be defended, either from *reaſon*, which, reflecting on the great frailty and corruption of human nature, teaches, that no man can ſafely be truſted with unlimited authority; or from *experience* and hiſtory, which inform us of the enormous abuſes, that ambition, in every age and country, has been found to make of ſo imprudent a confidence.

The ſame diſtinction between reaſon and experience is maintained in all our deliberations concerning the conduct of life; while the experienced ſtateſman, general, phyſician, or merchant, is truſted and followed; and the unpractiſed novice, with whatever natural talents endowed, neglected and deſpiſed. Though it be allowed, that reaſon may form very plauſible conjectures with regard to the conſequences of ſuch a particular conduct in ſuch particular circumſtances; it is ſtill ſuppoſed imperfect, without the aſſiſtance of experience, which is alone able to give ſtability and certainty to the maxims, derived from ſtudy and reflection.

But notwithſtanding that this diſtinction be thus univerſally received, both in the active and ſpeculative ſcenes of life, I ſhall not ſcruple to pronounce, that it is, at bottom, erroneous, at leaſt ſuperficial.

If we examine thoſe arguments, which, in any of the ſciences above-mentioned, are ſuppoſed to be the mere effects of reaſoning and reflection, they will be found to terminate, at laſt, in ſome general principle or concluſion, for which we can aſſign no reaſon but obſervation and experience. The only difference between them and thoſe maxims, which are vulgarly eſteemed the reſult of pure experience, is, that the former cannot be eſtabliſhed without ſome proceſs of thought, and ſome reflection on what we have obſerved, in order to diſtinguiſh

diſtinguiſh its differences, and trace its conſequences: Whereas in the latter, the experienced event is exactly and fully ſimilar to that which we infer as the reſult of any particular ſituation. The hiſtory of a Tiberius or a Nero makes us dread a like tyranny, were our monarchs freed from the reſtraints of laws and ſenates: But the obſervation of any fraud or cruelty, in private life, is ſufficient, with the aid of a little thought, to give us the ſame apprehenſion; while it ſerves as an inſtance of the general corruption of human nature, and ſhows us the danger which we muſt incur by repoſing an entire confidence in mankind. In both caſes, it is experience which is ultimately the foundation of our inference and concluſion.

There is no man ſo young and unexperienced, as not to have formed, from obſervation, many general and juſt maxims concerning human affairs and the conduct of life; but it muſt be confeſſed, that, when a man comes to put theſe in practice, he will be extremely liable to error, till time and farther experience both enlarge theſe maxims, and teach him their proper uſe and application. In every ſituation or incident, there are many particular and ſeemingly minute circumſtances, which the man of greateſt talents is, at firſt, apt to overlook, though on them the juſtneſs of his concluſions, and conſequently the prudence of his conduct, entirely depend. Not to mention, that, to a young beginner, the general obſervations and maxims occur not always on the proper occaſions, nor can be immediately applied with due calmneſs and diſtinction. The truth is, an unexperienced reaſoner could be no reaſoner at all, were he abſolutely unexperienced; and when we aſſign that character to any one, we mean it only in a comparative ſenſe, and ſuppoſe him poſſeſſed of experience in a ſmaller and more imperfect degree.

NOTE [C], p. 82.

IT may be pretended, that the reſiſtance which we meet with in bodies, obliging us frequently to exert our force, and call up all our power, this gives us the idea of force and power. It is this *niſus* or ſtrong endeavour, of which we are conſcious, that is the original impreſſion from which this idea is copied. But, firſt, we attribute power to a vaſt number of objects, where we never can ſuppoſe this reſiſtance or exertion of force to take place; to the Supreme Being, who never meets with any reſiſtance; to the mind in its command over its ideas and limbs, in common thinking and motion, where the effect follows immediately upon the will, without any exertion or ſummoning up of force; to inanimate matter, which is not capable

of

of this ſentiment. *Secondly*, This ſentiment of an endeavour to overcome reſiſtance, has no known connection with any event: What follows it we know by experience; but could not know it *à priori*. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that the animal *niſus*, which we experience, though it can afford no accurate preciſe idea of power, enters very much into that vulgar, inaccurate idea, which is formed of it.

NOTE [D], p. 88.

I NEED not examine at length the *vis inertiæ* which is ſo much talked of in the new philoſophy, and which is aſcribed to matter. We find by experience, that a body at reſt or in motion continues for ever in its preſent ſtate, till put from it by ſome new cauſe; and that a body impelled takes as much motion from the impelling body as it acquires itſelf. Theſe are facts. When we call this a *vis inertiæ*, we only mark theſe facts, without pretending to have any idea of the inert power; in the ſame manner as, when we talk of gravity, we mean certain effects, without comprehending that active power. It was never the meaning of Sir Iſaac Newton to rob ſecond cauſes of all force or energy; though ſome of his followers have endeavoured to eſtabliſh that theory upon his authority. On the contrary, that great philoſopher had recourſe to an etherial active fluid to explain his univerſal attraction; though he was ſo cautious and modeſt as to allow, that it was a mere hypotheſis, not to be inſiſted on, without more experiments. I muſt confeſs, that there is ſomething in the fate of opinions a little extraordinary. Des Cartes inſinuated that doctrine of the univerſal and ſole efficacy of the Deity, without inſiſting on it. Malebranche and other Carteſians made it the foundation of all their philoſophy. It had, however, no authority in England. Locke, Clarke, and Cudworth, never ſo much as take notice of it, but ſuppoſe all along, that matter has a real, though ſubordinate and derived, power. By what means has it become ſo prevalent among our modern metaphyſicians?

NOTE [E], p. 92.

ACCORDING to theſe explications and definitions, the idea of *power* is relative as much as that of *cauſe*; and both have a reference to an effect, or ſome other event conſtantly conjoined with the former. When we conſider the *unknown* circumſtance of an object, by which the degree or quantity of its effect is fixed and determined, we call that its power: And accordingly, it is allowed by all philoſophers, that the effect is the meaſure of the power. But if they had any idea of power, as it is in itſelf, why could not they meaſure

meaſure it in itſelf? The diſpute, whether the force of a body in motion be as its velocity, or the ſquare of its velocity? this diſpute, I ſay, needed not to be decided by comparing its effects in equal or unequal times, but by a direct menſuration and compariſon.

As to the frequent uſe of the words, Force, Power, Energy, &c. which every where occur in common converſation, as well as in philoſophy; that is no proof that we are acquainted, in any inſtance, with the connecting principle between cauſe and effect, or can account ultimately for the production of one thing by another. Theſe words, as commonly uſed, have very looſe meanings annexed to them; and their ideas are very uncertain and confuſed. No animal can put external bodies in motion without the ſentiment of a *niſus* or endeavour; and every animal has a ſentiment or feeling from the ſtroke or blow of an external object that is in motion. Theſe ſenſations, which are merely animal, and from which we can *à priori* draw no inference, we are apt to transfer to inanimate objects, and to ſuppoſe that they have ſome ſuch feelings, whenever they transfer or receive motion. With regard to energies, which are exerted, without our annexing to them any idea of communicated motion, we conſider only the conſtant experienced conjunction of the events; and as we *feel* a cuſtomary connection between the ideas, we transfer that feeling to the objects; as nothing is more uſual than to apply to external bodies every internal ſenſation which they occaſion.

NOTE [F], p. 109.

THE prevalence of the doctrine of liberty may be accounted for from another cauſe, viz. a falſe ſenſation or ſeeming experience which we have, or may have, of liberty or indifference, in many of our actions. The neceſſity of any action, whether of matter or of mind, is not, properly ſpeaking, a quality in the agent, but in any thinking or intelligent being, who may conſider the action; and it conſiſts chiefly in the determination of his thoughts to infer the exiſtence of that action from ſome preceding objects; as liberty, when oppoſed to neceſſity, is nothing but the want of that determination, and a certain looſeneſs or indifference, which we feel, in paſſing, or not paſſing, from the idea of one object to that of any ſucceeding one. Now we may obſerve, that though, in *reflecting* on human actions, we ſeldom feel ſuch a looſeneſs or indifference, but are commonly able to infer them with conſiderable certainty from their motives, and from the diſpoſitions of the agent; yet it frequently happens, that, in *performing* the actions themſelves, we are ſenſible of ſomething like

like it: And as all reſembling objects are readily taken for each other, this has been employed as a demonſtrative and even intuitive proof of human liberty. We feel, that our actions are ſubject to our will, on moſt occaſions; and imagine we feel, that the will itſelf is ſubject to nothing; becauſe when, by a denial of it, we are provoked to try, we feel that it moves eaſily every way, and produces an image of itſelf (or a *Velleity*, as it is called in the ſchools), even on that ſide on which it did not ſettle. This image, or faint motion, we perſuade ourſelves, could, at that time, have been completed into the thing itſelf; becauſe, ſhould that be denied, we find, upon a ſecond trial, that, at preſent, it can. We conſider not, that the fantaſtical deſire of ſhewing liberty, is here the motive of our actions. And it ſeems certain, that, however we may imagine we feel a liberty within ourſelves, a ſpectator can commonly infer our actions from our motives and character; and even where he cannot, he concludes in general that he might, were he perfectly acquainted with every circumſtance of our ſituation and temper, and the moſt ſecret ſprings of our complexion and diſpoſition. Now, this is the very eſſence of neceſſity, according to the foregoing doctrine.

NOTE [G], p. 111.

THUS, if a cauſe be defined, *that which produces any thing*; it is eaſy to obſerve, that *producing* is ſynonymous to *cauſing*. In like manner, if a cauſe be defined, *that by which any thing exiſts*; this is liable to the ſame objection. For what is meant by theſe words *by which*? Had it been ſaid that a cauſe is *that* after which *any thing conſtantly exiſts*; we ſhould have underſtood the terms. For this is, indeed, all we know of the matter. And this conſtancy forms the very eſſence of neceſſity, nor have we any other idea of it.

NOTE [H], p. 123.

SINCE all reaſoning concerning facts or cauſes is derived merely from cuſtom, it may be aſked how it happens, that men ſo much ſurpaſs animals in reaſoning, and one man ſo much ſurpaſs another? Has not the ſame cuſtom the ſame influence on all?

We ſhall here endeavour briefly to explain the great difference in human underſtandings: After which, the reaſon of the difference between men and animals will eaſily be comprehended.

1. When we have lived any time, and have been accuſtomed to the uniformity of nature, we acquire a general habit, by which we always tranſfer the known to the unknown, and conceive the latter to reſemble the former. By means of this general habitual principle, we regard

regard even one experiment as the foundation of reaſoning, and expect a ſimilar event with ſome degree of certainty, where the experiment has been made accurately, and free from all foreign circumſtances. It is therefore conſidered as a matter of great importance to obſerve the conſequences of things; and as one man may very much ſurpaſs another in attention, and memory and obſervation, this will make a very great difference in their reaſoning.

2. Where there is a complication of cauſes to produce any effect, one mind may be much larger than another, and better able to comprehend the whole ſyſtem of objects, and to infer juſtly their conſequences.

3. One man is able to carry on a chain of conſequences to a greater length than another.

4. Few men can think long without running into a confuſion of ideas, and miſtaking one for another; and there are various degrees of this infirmity.

5. The circumſtance, on which the effect depends, is frequently involved in other circumſtances, which are foreign and extrinſic. The ſeparation of it often requires great attention, accuracy and ſubtilty.

6. The forming of general maxims from particular obſervation is a very nice operation; and nothing is more uſual, from haſte or a narrowneſs of mind, which ſees not on all ſides, than to commit miſtakes in this particular.

7. When we reaſon from analogies, the man, who has the greater experience, or the greater promptitude of ſuggeſting analogies, will be the better reaſoner.

8. Biaſſes from prejudice, education, paſſion, party, &c. hang more upon one mind than another.

9. After we have acquired a confidence in human teſtimony, books and converſation enlarge much more the ſphere of one man's experience and thought than thoſe of another.

It would be eaſy to diſcover many other circumſtances that make a difference in the underſtandings of men.

NOTE [I], p. 129.

NO Indian, it is evident, could have experience that water did not freeze in cold climates. This is placing nature in a ſituation quite unknown to him; and it is impoſſible for him to tell *à priori* what will reſult from it. It is making a new experiment, the conſequence of which is always uncertain. One may ſometimes conjecture from

from analogy what will follow; but ſtill this is but conjecture. And it muſt be confeſſed, that, in the preſent caſe of freezing, the event follows contrary to the rules of analogy, and is ſuch, as a rational Indian would not look for. The operations of cold upon water are not gradual, according to the degrees of cold; but whenever it comes to the freezing point, the water paſſes in a moment from the utmoſt liquidity, to perfect hardneſs. Such an event, therefore, may be denominated *extraordinary*, and requires a pretty ſtrong teſtimony, to render it credible to people in a warm climate: But ſtill, it is not *miraculous*, nor contrary to uniform experience of the courſe of nature, in caſes where all the circumſtances are the ſame. The inhabitants of Sumatra have always ſeen water fluid in their own climate, and the freezing of their rivers ought to be deemed a prodigy: But they never ſaw water in Muſcovy during the winter; and therefore they cannot reaſonably be poſitive what would there be the conſequence.

NOTE [K], p. 130.

SOMETIMES an event may not, *in itſelf, ſeem* to be contrary to the laws of nature, and yet, if it were real, it might, by reaſon of ſome circumſtances, be denominated a miracle; becauſe, in *fact*, it is contrary to theſe laws. Thus, if a perſon, claiming a divine authority, ſhould command a ſick perſon to be well, a healthful man to fall down dead, the clouds to pour rain, the winds to blow; in ſhort, ſhould order many natural events, which immediately follow upon his command; theſe might juſtly be eſteemed miracles, becauſe they are really, in this caſe, contrary to the laws of nature. For if any ſuſpicion remain, that the event and command concurred by accident, there is no miracle, and no tranſgreſſion of the laws of nature. If this ſuſpicion be removed, there is evidently a miracle, and a tranſgreſſion of theſe laws; becauſe nothing can be more contrary to nature, than that the voice or command of a man ſhould have ſuch an influence. A miracle may be accurately defined, *a tranſgreſſion of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interpoſition of ſome inviſible agent.* A miracle may either be diſcoverable by men or not. This alters not its nature and eſſence. The raiſing of a houſe or ſhip into the air, is a viſible miracle. The raiſing of a feather, when the wind wants ever ſo little of a force requiſite for that purpoſe, is as real a miracle, though not ſo ſenſible with regard to us.

NOTE

NOTE [L], p. 140.

THIS book was writ by Monſ. Montgeron, counſellor or judge of the parliament of Paris, a man of figure and character, who was alſo a martyr to the cauſe, and is now ſaid to be ſomewhere in a dungeon on account of his book.

There is another book in three volumes (called *Recueil des Miracles de l'Abbé Paris*) giving an account of many of theſe miracles, and accompanied with prefatory diſcourſes, which are very well written. There runs, however, through the whole of theſe, a ridiculous compariſon between the miracles of our Saviour and thoſe of the Abbé; wherein it is aſſerted, that the evidence of the latter is equal to that of the former: As if the teſtimony of men could ever be put in the balance with that of God himſelf, who conducted the pen of the inſpired writers. If theſe writers, indeed, were to be conſidered merely as human teſtimony, the French author is very moderate in his compariſon; ſince he might, with ſome appearance of reaſon, pretend, that the Janſeniſt miracles much ſurpaſs the other in evidence and authority. The following circumſtances are drawn from authentic papers, inſerted in the above-mentioned book.

Many of the miracles of Abbé Paris, were proved immediately by witneſſes before the officiality or biſhop's court at Paris, under the eye of cardinal Noailles; whoſe character for integrity and capacity was never conteſted even by his enemies.

His ſucceſſor in the archbiſhopric was an enemy to the Janſeniſts, and for that reaſon promoted to the ſee by the court. Yet 22 rectors or *curés* of Paris, with infinite earneſtneſs, preſs him to examine thoſe miracles, which they aſſert to be known to the whole world, and undiſputably certain: But he wiſely forbore.

The Moliniſt party had tried to diſcredit theſe miracles in one inſtance, that of Mademoiſelle le Franc. But, beſides that their proceedings were, in many reſpects, the moſt irregular in the world, particularly in citing only a few of the Janſeniſt witneſſes, whom they tampered with: Beſides this, I ſay, they ſoon found themſelves overwhelmed by a cloud of new witneſſes, one hundred and twenty in number, moſt of them perſons of credit and ſubſtance in Paris, who gave oath for the miracle. This was accompanied with a ſolemn and earneſt appeal to the parliament. But the parliament were forbidden by authority to meddle in the affair. It was at laſt obſerved, that where men are heated by zeal and enthuſiaſm, there is no degree of human teſtimony ſo ſtrong as may not be procured for the greateſt abſurdity: And

And thoſe who will be ſo ſilly as to examine the affair by that medium, and ſeek particular flaws in the teſtimony, are almoſt ſure to be confounded. It muſt be a miſerable impoſture, indeed, that does not prevail in that conteſt.

All who have been in France about that time, have heard of the reputation of Monſ. Heraut, the *lieutenant de Police*, whoſe vigilance, penetration, activity, and extenſive intelligence, have been much talked of. This magiſtrate, who by the nature of his office is almoſt abſolute, was inveſted with full powers, on purpoſe to ſuppreſs or diſcredit theſe miracles; and he frequently ſeized immediately, and examined the witneſſes and ſubjects of them: But never could reach any thing ſatisfactory againſt them.

In the caſe of Mademoiſelle Thibaut, he ſent the famous De Sylva to examine her; whoſe evidence is very curious. The phyſician declares, that it was impoſſible ſhe could have been ſo ill as was proved by witneſſes; becauſe it was impoſſible ſhe could, in ſo ſhort a time, have recovered ſo perfectly as he found her. He reaſoned, like a man of ſenſe, from natural cauſes; but the oppoſite party told him, that the whole was a miracle, and that his evidence was the very beſt proof of it.

The Moliniſts were in a ſad dilemma. They durſt not aſſert the abſolute inſufficiency of human evidence to prove a miracle. They were obliged to ſay, that theſe miracles were wrought by witchcraft and the devil. But they were told, that this was the reſource of the Jews of old.

No Janſeniſt was ever embarraſſed to account for the ceſſation of the miracles, when the church-yard was ſhut up by the king's edict. It was the touch of the tomb which produced theſe extraordinary effects; and when no one could approach the tomb, no effects could be expected. God, indeed, could have thrown down the walls in a moment; but he is maſter of his own graces and works, and it belongs not to us to account for them. He did not throw down the walls of every city like thoſe of Jericho, on the ſounding of the rams horns; nor break up the priſon of every apoſtle, like that of St Paul.

No leſs a man than the Duc de Chatillon, a duke and peer of France, of the higheſt rank and family, gives evidence of a miraculous cure performed upon a ſervant of his, who had lived ſeveral years in his houſe with a viſible and palpable infirmity.

I ſhall conclude with obſerving, that no clergy are more celebrated for ſtrictneſs of life and manners than the ſecular clergy of France, particularly

particularly the rectors or *curés* of Paris, who bear teſtimony to theſe impoſtures.

The learning, genius, and probity of the gentlemen, and the auſterity of the nuns of Port-Royal, have been much celebrated all over Europe. Yet they all give evidence for a miracle, wrought on the niece of the famous Paſcal, whoſe ſanctity of life, as well as extraordinary capacity, is well known. The famous Racine gives an account of this miracle in his famous hiſtory of Port-Royal, and fortifies it with all the proofs, which a multitude of nuns, prieſts, phyſicians, and men of the world, all of them of undoubted credit, could beſtow upon it. Several men of letters, particularly the biſhop of Tournay, thought this miracle ſo certain, as to employ it in the refutation of atheiſts and freethinkers. The queen-regent of France, who was extremely prejudiced againſt the Port-Royal, ſent her own phyſician to examine the miracle, who returned an abſolute convert. In ſhort, the ſupernatural cure was ſo unconteſtable, that it ſaved, for a time, that famous monaſtery from the ruin with which it was threatened by the Jeſuits. Had it been a cheat, it had certainly been detected by ſuch ſagacious and powerful antagoniſts, and muſt have haſtened the ruin of the contrivers. Our divines, who can build up a formidable caſtle from ſuch deſpicable materials; what a prodigious fabric could they have reared from theſe and many other circumſtances, which I have not mentioned! How often would the great names of Paſcal, Racine, Arnaud, Nicole, have reſounded in our ears? But if they be wiſe, they had better adopt the miracle, as being more worth, a thouſand times, than all the reſt of their collection. Beſides, it may ſerve very much to their purpoſe. For that miracle was really performed by the touch of an authentic holy prickle of the holy thorn, which compoſed the holy crown, which, &c.

NOTE [M], p. 162.

IN general, it may, I think, be eſtabliſhed as a maxim, that where any cauſe is known only by its particular effects, it muſt be impoſſible to infer any new effects from that cauſe; ſince the qualities, which are requiſite to produce theſe new effects along with the former, muſt either be different, or ſuperior, or of more extenſive operation, than thoſe which ſimply produced the effect, whence alone the cauſe is ſuppoſed to be known to us. We can never, therefore, have any reaſon to ſuppoſe the exiſtence of theſe qualities. To ſay, that the new effects proceed only from a continuation of the ſame energy, which is already known from the firſt effects, will not re-

move the difficulty. For even granting this to be the caſe (which can ſeldom be ſuppoſed), the very continuation and exertion of a like energy (for it is impoſſible it can be abſolutely the ſame); I ſay, this exertion of a like energy, in a different period of ſpace and time, is a very arbitrary ſuppoſition, and what there cannot poſſibly be any traces of in the effects, from which all our knowledge of the cauſe is originally derived. Let the *inferred* cauſe be exactly proportioned (as it ſhould be) to the known effect; and it is impoſſible that it can poſſeſs any qualities, from which new or different effects can be *inferred*.

NOTE [N], p. 172.

THIS argument is drawn from Dr Berkley; and indeed moſt of the writings of that very ingenious author form the beſt leſſons of ſcepticiſm which are to be found either among the ancient or modern philoſophers, Bayle not excepted. He profeſſes, however, in his title-page (and undoubtedly with great truth) to have compoſed his book againſt the ſceptics as well as againſt the atheiſts and free-thinkers. But that all his arguments, though otherwiſe intended, are, in reality, merely ſceptical, appears from this, *that they admit of no anſwer, and produce no conviction*. Their only effect is to cauſe that momentary amazement and irreſolution and confuſion, which is the reſult of ſcepticiſm.

NOTE [O], p. 174.

WHATEVER diſputes there may be about mathematical points, we muſt allow that there are phyſical points; that is, parts of extenſion, which cannot be divided or leſſened, either by the eye or imagination. Theſe images, then, which are preſent to the fancy or ſenſes, are abſolutely indiviſible, and conſequently muſt be allowed by mathematicians to be infinitely leſs than any real part of extenſion; and yet nothing appears more certain to reaſon, than that an infinite number of them compoſes an infinite extenſion. How much more an infinite number of thoſe infinitely ſmall parts of extenſion, which are ſtill ſuppoſed infinitely diviſible!

NOTE [P], p. 175.

IT ſeems to me not impoſſible to avoid theſe abſurdities and contradictions, if it be admitted, that there is no ſuch thing as abſtract or general ideas, properly ſpeaking; but that all general ideas are, in reality, particular ones, attached to a general term, which recals, upon occaſion, other particular ones, that reſemble, in certain circumſtances, the idea preſent to the mind. Thus when the term Horſe is pronounced, we immediately figure to ourſelves the idea

idea of a black or a white animal, of a particular ſize or figure: But as that term is alſo uſually applied to animals of other colours, figures, and ſizes, theſe ideas, though not actually preſent to the imagination, are eaſily recalled; and our reaſoning and concluſion proceed in the ſame way as if they were actually preſent. If this be admitted (as ſeems reaſonable), it follows, that all the ideas of quantity, upon which mathematicians reaſon, are nothing but particular, and ſuch as are ſuggeſted by the ſenſes and imagination, and, conſequently, cannot be infinitely diviſible. It is ſufficient to have dropped this hint at preſent, without proſecuting it any farther. It certainly concerns all lovers of ſcience not to expoſe themſelves to the ridicule and contempt of the ignorant by their concluſions; and this ſeems the readieſt ſolution of theſe difficulties.

NOTE [Q], p. 182.

THAT impious maxim of the ancient philoſophy, *Ex nihilo, nihil fit*, by which the creation of matter was excluded, ceaſes to be a maxim, according to this philoſophy. Not only the will of the ſupreme Being may create matter; but, for aught we know, *à priori*, the will of any other being might create it, or any other cauſe, that the moſt whimſical imagination can aſſign.

NOTE [R], p. 201.

THAT property is a ſpecies of *relation*, which produces a connection between the perſon and the object, is evident: The imagination paſſes naturally and eaſily from the conſideration of a field to that of the perſon to whom it belongs. It may only be aſked, how this relation is reſolvable into any of thoſe three, viz. *cauſation*, *contiguity*, and *reſemblance*, which we have affirmed to be the only connecting principles among ideas. To be the proprietor of any thing, is to be the ſole perſon who, by the laws of ſociety, has a right to diſpoſe of it, and to enjoy the benefit of it. This right has at leaſt a tendency to procure the perſon the exerciſe of it; and in fact does commonly procure him that advantage. For rights which had no influence, and never took place, would be no rights at all. Now a perſon who diſpoſes of an object, and reaps benefit from it, both produces, or may produce, effects on it, and is affected by it. Property therefore is a ſpecies of *cauſation*. It enables the perſon to produce alterations on the object, and it ſuppoſes that his condition is improved and altered by it. It is indeed the relation the moſt intereſting of any, and occurs the moſt frequently to the mind.

NOTE [S], p. 243.

THIS fiction of a ſtate of nature, as a ſtate of war, was not firſt ſtarted by Mr Hobbes, as is commonly imagined. Plato endeavours to refute an hypotheſis very like it in the 2d, 3d, and 4th book *de republica*. Cicero, on the contrary, ſuppoſes it certain and univerſally acknowledged in the following paſſage. "Quis enim "veſtrûm, judices, ignorat, ita naturam rerum tuliſſe, ut quodam "tempore homines, nondum neque naturali, neque civili jure deſcrip- "to, fuſi per agros, ac diſperſi vagarentur, tantumque haberent quan- "tum manu ac viribus, per cædem ac vulnera, aut eripere, aut reti- "nere potuiſſent? Qui igitur primi virtute & conſilio præſtanti exti- "terunt, ii perſpecto genere humanæ docilitatis atque ingenii, diſſi- "patos, unum in locum congregârunt, eoſque ex feritate illa ad juſti- "tiam ac manſuetudinem tranſduxerunt. Tum res ad communem "utilitatem, quas publicas appellamus, tum conventicula hominum, "quæ poſtea civitates nominatæ ſunt, tum domicilia conjuncta, quas "urbes dicamus, invento & divino & humano jure, mœnibus ſepſe- "runt. Atque inter hanc vitam, perpolitam humanitate, & illam "immanem, nihil tam intereſt quam JUS atque VIS. Horum utro "uti nolimus, altero eſt utendum. Vim volumus extingui? Jus "valeat neceſſe eſt, id eſt, judicia, quibus omne jus continetur. Ju- "dicia diſplicent, aut nulla, ſunt? Vis dominetur neceſſe eſt? "Hæc vident omnes." *Pro Sext.* l. 42.

NOTE [T], p. 251.

THE author of *L'Eſprit des Loix*. This illuſtrious writer, however, ſets out with a different theory, and ſuppoſes all right to be founded on certain *rapports* or relations; which is a ſyſtem that, in my opinion, never will be reconciled with true philoſophy. Father Malebranche, as far as I can learn, was the firſt that ſtarted this abſtract theory of morals, which was afterwards adopted by Cudworth, Clarke, and others; and as it excludes all ſentiment, and pretends to found every thing on reaſon, it has not wanted followers in this philoſophic age. See Section I. Appendix I. With regard to juſtice, the virtue here treated of, the inference againſt this theory ſeems ſhort and concluſive. Property is allowed to be dependent on civil laws; civil laws are allowed to have no other object but the intereſt of ſociety: This therefore muſt be allowed to be the ſole foundation of property and juſtice. Not t mention, that our obligation itſelf to obey the magiſtrate and his laws is founded on nothing but the intereſts of ſociety.

If

If the ideas of juſtice, ſometimes, do not follow the diſpoſitions of civil law; we ſhall find, that theſe caſes, inſtead of objections, are confirmations of the theory delivered above. Where a civil law is ſo perverſe as to croſs all the intereſts of ſociety, it loſes all its authority, and men judge by the ideas of natural juſtice, which are conformable to thoſe intereſts. Sometimes alſo civil laws, for uſeful purpoſes, require a ceremony or form to any deed; and where that is wanting, their decrees run contrary to the uſual tenor of juſtice; but one who takes advantage of ſuch chicanes, is not commonly regarded as an honeſt man. Thus, the intereſts of ſociety require, that contracts be fulfilled; and there is not a more material article either of natural or civil juſtice: But the omiſſion of a trifling circumſtance will often, by law, invalidate a contract *in foro humano*, but not *in foro conſcientiæ*, as divines expreſs themſelves. In theſe caſes, the magiſtrate is ſuppoſed only to withdraw his power of enforcing the right, not to have altered the right. Where his intention extends to the right, and is conformable to the intereſts of ſociety, it never fails to alter the right: a clear proof of the origin of juſtice and of property, as aſſigned above.

NOTE [U], p. 253.

IT is evident, that the will or conſent alone never transfers property, nor cauſes the obligation of a promiſe (for the ſame reaſoning extends to both), but the will muſt be expreſſed by words or ſigns, in order to impoſe a tie upon any man. The expreſſion being once brought in as ſubſervient to the will, ſoon becomes the principal part of the promiſe; nor will a man be leſs bound by his word, though he ſecretly give a different direction to his intention, and withhold the aſſent of his mind. But though the expreſſion makes, on moſt occaſions, the whole of the promiſe, yet it does not always ſo; and one who ſhould make uſe of any expreſſion, of which he knows not the meaning, and which he uſes without any ſenſe of the conſequences, would not certainly be bound by it. Nay, though he know its meaning, yet if he uſe it in jeſt only, and with ſuch ſigns as evidently ſhow, that he has no ſerious intention of binding himſelf, he would not ly under any obligation of performance; but it is neceſſary that the words be a perfect expreſſion of the will, without any contrary ſigns. Nay, even this we muſt not carry ſo far as to imagine, that one whom, by our quickneſs of underſtanding, we conjecture, from certain ſigns, to have an intention of deceiving us, is not bound by his expreſſion or verbal promiſe, if we accept of it; but muſt limit

this concluſion to thoſe caſes where the ſigns are of a different nature from thoſe of deceit. All theſe contradictions are eaſily accounted for, if juſtice ariſe entirely from its uſefulneſs to ſociety; but will never be explained on any other hypotheſis.

It is remarkable, that the moral deciſions of the *Jeſuits* and other relaxed caſuiſts, were commonly formed in proſecution of ſome ſuch ſubtilties of reaſoning as are here pointed out, and proceed as much from the habit of ſcholaſtic refinement as from any corruption of the heart, if we may follow the authority of Monſ. Bayle. See his Dictionary, article LOYOLA. And why has the indignation of mankind riſen ſo high againſt theſe caſuiſts; but becauſe every one perceived, that human ſociety could not ſubſiſt were ſuch practices authorized, and that morals muſt always be handled, with a view to public intereſt, more than philoſophical regularity? If the ſecret direction of the intention, ſaid every man of ſenſe, could invalidate a contract; where is our ſecurity? And yet a metaphyſical ſchoolman might think, that, where an intention was ſuppoſed to be requiſite, if that intention really had not place, no conſequence ought to follow, and no obligation be impoſed. The caſuiſtical ſubtilties may not be greater than the ſubtilties of lawyers, hinted at above; but as the former are *pernicious*, and the latter *innocent* and even *neceſſary*, this is the reaſon of the very different reception they meet with from the world.

It is a doctrine of the church of Rome, that the prieſt, by a ſecret direction of his intention, can invalidate any ſacrament. This poſition is derived from a ſtrict and regular proſecution of the obvious truth, that empty words alone, without any meaning or intention in the ſpeaker, can never be attended with any effect. If the ſame concluſion be not admitted in reaſonings concerning civil contracts, where the affair is allowed to be of ſo much leſs conſequence than the eternal ſalvation of thouſands, it proceeds entirely from mens ſenſe of the danger and inconvenience of the doctrine in the former caſe: And we may thence obſerve, that however poſitive, arrogant, and dogmatical any ſuperſtition may appear, it never can convey any thorough perſuaſion of the reality of its objects, or put them, in any degree, on a balance with the common incidents of life, which we learn from daily obſervation and experimental reaſoning.

NOTE [X], p. 259.

THE only ſolution, which Plato gives to all the objections that might be raiſed againſt the community of women, eſtabliſhed in his imaginary commonwealth, is, Καλλιστα γαρ δη τυτο ᾗ λεγεται ᾗ διειρηται, οτι το μεν ωφελιμον μαλιστον. Το δε βλαβερον αισχιστον. *Scite enim iſtud*

ſtud & dicitur & dicetur, Id quod utile ſit honeſtum eſſe, quod autem inutile ſit turpe eſſe. De Rep. lib. v. p. 457. ex edit. Ser. And this maxim will admit of no doubt, where public utility is concerned; which is Plato's meaning. And indeed to what other purpoſe do all the ideas of chaſtity and modeſty ſerve? *Niſi utile eſt quod facimus, fruſtra eſt gloria,* ſays Phædrus. Καλον τον βλαβερων υδεν, ſays Plutarch *de vitioſo pudore.* Nihil eorum quæ damnoſa ſunt, pulchrum eſt. The ſame was the opinion of the Stoics. Φασιν ουν οι Στωικοι αγαθον ειναι ωφελιαν η ουκ ετερων ωφελειας, ωφελειν μεν λεγοντες την αρετην η την σπουδαιαν πραξιν. Sept. Emp. lib. iii. cap. 20.

NOTE [Y], p. 263.

THAT the lighter machine yield to the heavier, and, in machines of the ſame kind, that the empty yield to the loaded: this rule is founded on convenience. That thoſe who are going to the capital take place of thoſe who are coming from it: this ſeems to be founded on ſome idea of the dignity of the great city, and of the preference of the future to the paſt. From like reaſons, among foot-walkers, the right hand entitles a man to the wall, and prevents joſtling, which peaceable people find very diſagreeable and inconvenient.

NOTE [Z], p. 265.

WE ought not to imagine, becauſe an inanimate object may be uſeful as well as a man, that therefore it ought alſo, according to this ſyſtem, to merit the appellation of *virtuous.* The ſentiments, excited by utility, are, in the two caſes, very different; and the one is mixed with affection, eſteem, and approbation, &c. and not the other. In like manner, an inanimate object may have good colour and proportions as well as a human figure. But can we ever be in love with the former? There are a numerous ſet of paſſions and ſentiments, of which thinking rational beings are, by the original conſtitution of nature, the only proper objects: And though the very ſame qualities be transferred to an inſenſible, inanimate being, they will not excite the ſame ſentiments. The beneficial qualities of herbs and minerals are, indeed, ſometimes called their *virtues;* but this is an effect of the caprice of language, which ought not to be regarded in reaſoning. For though there be a ſpecies of approbation attending even inanimate objects, when beneficial; yet this ſentiment is ſo weak, and ſo different from that which is directed to beneficent magiſtrates or ſtateſmen, that they ought not to be ranked under the ſame claſs or appellation.

A very ſmall variation of the object, even where the ſame qualities are preſerved, will deſtroy a ſentiment. Thus, the ſame beauty, transferred to a different ſex, excites no amorous paſſion, where nature is not extremely perverted.

NOTE [AA], p. 267.

UNDUTIFULNESS to parents is diſapproved of by mankind, προορωμενυς το μελλον, ϗ συλλογιζομενυς οτι το παραπλυτιον εκαστοις αυτοι συγκυρησει. Ingratitude for a like reaſon (though he ſeems there to mix a more generous regard) συναγαναπτυσσας μεν τω φιλας, αναφορας δ' εφ' αυτυς το παραπλησιον εξ ων υποψιγνοιαι τις εννοια παρεκαστω τυ καθηκοντος δυναμεως ϗ θεωριας. Lib. vi. cap. 4. Perhaps the hiſtorian only meant, that our ſympathy and humanity were more enlivened by our conſidering the ſimilarity of our caſe with that of the perſon ſuffering; which is a juſt ſentiment.

NOTE [BB], p. 272.

IT is needleſs to puſh our reſearches ſo far as to aſk, why we have humanity or a fellow-feeling with others? It is ſufficient, that this is experienced to be a principle in human nature. We muſt ſtop ſomewhere in our examination of cauſes; and there are, in every ſcience, ſome general principles, beyond which we cannot hope to find any principle more general. No man is abſolutely indifferent to the happineſs and miſery of others. The firſt has a natural tendency to give pleaſure; the ſecond, pain. This every one may find in himſelf. It is not probable, that theſe principles can be reſolved into principles more ſimple and univerſal, whatever attempts may have been made to that purpoſe. But if it were poſſible, it belongs not to the preſent ſubject; and we may here ſafely conſider these principles as original: Happy, if we can render all the conſequences ſufficiently plain and perſpicuous.

NOTE [CC], p. 277.

IN proportion to the ſtation which a man poſſeſſes, according to the relations in which he is placed; we always expect from him a greater or leſs degree of good, and, when diſappointed, blame his inutility; and much more do we blame him, if any ill or prejudice ariſe from his conduct and behaviour. When the intereſts of one country interfere with thoſe of another, we eſtimate the merits of a ſtateſman by the good or ill which reſults to his own country from his meaſures and counſels, without regard to the prejudice which he brings on its enemies and rivals. His fellow-citizens are the objects, which ly neareſt the eye, while we determine his character. And as nat-

nature has implanted in every one a ſuperior affection to his own country, we never expect any regard to diſtant nations, where a competition ariſes. Not to mention, that while every man conſults the good of his own community, we are ſenſible, that the general intereſt of mankind is better promoted, than by any looſe indeterminate views to the good of a ſpecies, whence no beneficial action could ever reſult, for want of a duly limited object, on which they could exert themſelves.

NOTE [DD], p. 280.

FOR a like reaſon, the tendencies of actions and characters, not their real accidental conſequences, are alone regarded in our moral determinations or general judgments; though in our real feeling or ſentiment, we cannot help paying greater regard to one whoſe ſtation, joined to virtue, renders him really uſeful to ſociety, than to one who exerts the ſocial virtues only in good intentions and benevolent affections. Separating the character from the fortune, by an eaſy and neceſſary effort of thought, we pronounce theſe perſons alike, and give them the ſame general praiſe. The judgment corrects, or endeavours to correct, the appearance; but is not able entirely to prevail over ſentiment.

Why is this peach-tree ſaid to be better than that other, but becauſe it produces more or better fruit? And would not the ſame praiſe be given it though ſnails or vermin had deſtroyed the peaches before they came to full maturity? In morals too, is not *the tree known by the fruit?* And cannot we eaſily diſtinguiſh between nature and accident in the one caſe as well as in the other?

NOTE [EE], p. 281.

IT is wiſely ordained by nature, that private connections ſhould commonly prevail over univerſal views and conſiderations; otherwiſe our affections and actions would be diſſipated and loſt for want of a proper limited object. Thus a ſmall benefit done to ourſelves, or our near friends, excites more lively ſentiments of love and approbation than a great benefit done to a diſtant commonwealth: But ſtill we know here, as in all the ſenſes, to correct theſe inequalities by reflection, and retain a general ſtandard of vice and virtue, founded chiefly on general uſefulneſs.

NOTE [FF], p. 286.

ONE may venture to affirm, that there is no human creature to whom the appearance of happineſs (where envy or revenge has no place) does not give pleaſure; that of miſery, uneaſineſs. This

ſeems

ſeems inſeparable from our make and conſtitution. But they are only the more generous minds, that are thence prompted to ſeek zealouſly the good of others, and to have a real paſſion for their welfare. With men of narrow and ungenerous ſpirits, this ſympathy goes not beyond a ſlight feeling of the imagination, which ſerves only to excite ſentiments of complacency or cenſure, and makes them apply to the object either honourable or diſhonourable appellations. A griping miſer, for inſtance, praiſes extremely *induſtry* and *frugality* even in others, and ſets them, in his eſtimation, above all the other virtues. He knows the good that reſults from them, and feels that ſpecies of happineſs with a more lively ſympathy than any other you could repreſent to him; though perhaps he would not part with a ſhilling to make the fortune of the induſtrious man whom he praiſes ſo highly.

NOTE [GG], p. 297.

DIODORUS SICULUS, lib. xv. It may not be improper to give the character of Epaminondas, as drawn by the hiſtorian, in order to ſhow the ideas of perfect merit which prevailed in thoſe ages. In other illuſtrious men, ſays he, you will obſerve, that each poſſeſſed ſome one ſhining quality, which was the foundation of his fame: In Epaminondas all the *virtues* are found united; force of body, eloquence of expreſſion, vigour of mind, contempt of riches, gentleneſs of diſpoſition, and *what is chiefly to be regarded*, courage and conduct in war.

NOTE [HH], p. 298.

ALL men are equally liable to pain and diſeaſe and ſickneſs; and may again recover health and eaſe. Theſe circumſtances, as they make no diſtinction between one man and another, are no ſource of pride or humility, regard or contempt. But comparing our own ſpecies to ſuperior ones, it is a very mortifying conſideration, that we ſhould all be ſo liable to diſeaſes and infirmities; and divines accordingly employ this topic in order to depreſs ſelf-conceit and vanity. They would have more ſucceſs if the common bent of our thoughts were not perpetually turned to compare ourſelves with others. The infirmities of old age are mortifying; becauſe a compariſon with the young may take place. The king's evil is induſtriouſly concealed, becauſe it affects others, and is often tranſmitted to poſterity. The caſe is nearly the ſame with ſuch diſeaſes as convey any nauſeous or frightful images; the epilepſy, for inſtance, ulcers, ſores, ſcabs, &c.

NOTE

NOTE [II], p. 300.

THERE is ſomething extraordinary, and ſeemingly unaccountable, in the operation of our paſſions, when we conſider the fortune and ſituation of others. Very often another's advancement and proſperity produces envy, which has a ſtrong mixture of hatred, and ariſes chiefly from the compariſon of ourſelves with the perſon. At the very ſame time, or at leaſt, in very ſhort intervals, we may feel the paſſion of reſpect, which is a ſpecies of affection or good-will, with a mixture of humility. On the other hand, the misfortunes of our fellows often cauſe pity, which has in it a ſtrong mixture of good-will. This ſentiment of pity is nearly allied to contempt, which is a ſpecies of diſlike, with a mixture of pride. I only point out theſe phænomena as a ſubject of ſpeculation to ſuch as are curious with regard to moral inquiries. It is ſufficient for the preſent purpoſe to obſerve in general, that power and riches commonly cauſe reſpect, poverty and meanneſs contempt, though particular views and incidents may ſometimes raiſe the paſſions of envy and of pity.

NOTE [KK], p. 302.

THERE is no man, who, on particular occaſions, is not affected with all the diſagreeable paſſions, fear, anger, dejection, grief, melancholy, anxiety, &c. But theſe, ſo far as they are natural and univerſal, make no difference between one man and another, and can never be the object of blame. It is only when the diſpoſition gives a *propenſity* to any of theſe diſagreeable paſſions, that they diſfigure the character; and, by giving uneaſineſs, convey the ſentiment of diſapprobation to the ſpectator.

NOTE [LL], p. 305.

TACIT. hiſt. lib. iii. The author, entering upon the narration, ſays, *Laniata veſte, fœdum ſpectaculum ducebatur, multis increpantibus, nullo inlacrimante:* deformitas exitus miſericordiam abſtulerat. To enter thoroughly into this method of thinking, we muſt make allowance for the ancient maxims, that no one ought to prolong his life after it became diſhonourable; but, as he had always a right to diſpoſe of it, it then became a duty to part with it.

NOTE [MM], p. 305.

THE abſence of virtue may often be a vice, and that of the higheſt kind; as in the inſtance of ingratitude, as well as meanneſs. Where we expect a beauty, the diſappointment gives an uneaſy ſenſation, and produces a real deformity. An abjectneſs of character likewiſe is diſguſtful and contemptible in another view. Where a man has

has no ſenſe of value in himſelf, we are not likely to have any higher eſteem of him. And if the ſame perſon who crouches to his ſuperiors, is inſolent to his inferiors (as often happens), this contrariety of behaviour, inſtead of correcting the former vice, aggravates it extremely, by the addition of a vice ſtill more odious. See Sect. 8.

NOTE [NN], p. 328.

IT ſeems certain, both from reaſon and experience, that a rude untaught ſavage, regulates chiefly his love and hatred by the ideas of private utility and injury, and has but faint conceptions of a general rule or ſyſtem of behaviour. The man who ſtands oppoſite to him in battle, he hates heartily, not only for the preſent moment, which is almoſt unavoidable, but for ever after; nor is he ſatisfied without the moſt extreme puniſhment and vengeance. But we, accuſtomed to ſociety, and to more enlarged reflections, conſider, that this man is ſerving his own country and community; that any man, in the ſame ſituation, would do the ſame; that we ourſelves, in like circumſtances, obſerve a like conduct; that, in general, human ſociety is beſt ſupported on ſuch maxims. And by theſe ſuppoſitions and views, we correct, in ſome meaſure, our ruder and narrower paſſions. And though much of our friendſhip and enmity be ſtill regulated by private conſiderations of benefit and harm, we pay at leaſt this homage to general rules which we are accuſtomed to reſpect, that we commonly pervert our adverſary's conduct, by imputing malice or injuſtice to him, in order to give vent to thoſe paſſions which ariſe from ſelf-love and private intereſt. When the heart is full of rage, it never wants pretences of this nature; though ſometimes as frivolous as thoſe from which Horace, being almoſt cruſhed by the fall of a tree, affects to accuſe of parricide the firſt planter of it.

NOTE [OO], p. 353.

BENEVOLENCE naturally divides into two kinds, the *general* and the *particular*. The firſt is, where we have no friendſhip or connection, or eſteem for the perſon, but feel only a general ſympathy with him, or a compaſſion for his pains, and a congratulation with his pleaſures. The other ſpecies of benevolence is founded on an opinion of virtue, on ſervices done us, or on ſome particular connections. Both theſe ſentiments muſt be allowed real in human nature; but whether they will reſolve into ſome nice conſiderations of ſelf-love, is a queſtion more curious than important. The former ſentiment, to wit, that of general benevolence, or humanity, or ſympathy, we ſhall have occaſion frequently to treat of in the courſe of this inquiry; and

and I assume it as real, from general experience, without any other proof.

NOTE [PP], p. 362.

THIS theory concerning the origin of property, and consequently of justice, is, in the main, the same with that hinted at and adopted by Grotius. "Hinc discimus, quæ fuerit causa, ob quam a "primæva communione rerum primo mobilium, deinde et immobilium "discessum est: nimirum quod cum non contenti homines vesci sponte "natis, antra habitare, corpore aut nudo agere, aut corticibus arbo- "rum ferarumve pellibus vestito, vitæ genus exquisitius delegissent, in- "dustria opus fuit, quam singuli rebus singulis adhiberent: Quo mi- "nus autem fructus in commune conferrentur, primum obstitit loco- "rum, in quæ homines discesserunt, distantia, deinde justitiæ et amoris "defectus, per quem fiebat, ut nec in labore, nec in consumptione "fructuum, quæ debebat, æqualitas servaretur. Simul discimus, quo- "modo res in proprietatem iverint; non animi actu solo, neque enim "scire alii poterant, quid alii suum esse vellent, ut eo abstinerent, et "idem velle plures poterant; sed pacto quodam aut expresso, ut per "divisionem, aut tacito, ut per occupationem." De jure belli et pacis, Lib. ii. cap. 2. § 2. art. 4. et 5.

NOTE [QQ], p. 363.

NATURAL may be opposed, either to what is *unusual*, *miraculous*, or *artificial*. In the two former senses, justice and property are undoubtedly natural. But as they suppose reason, forethought, design, and a social union and confederacy among men, perhaps that epithet cannot strictly, in the last sense, be applied to them. Had men lived without society, property had never been known, and neither justice nor injustice had ever existed. But society among human creatures had been impossible without reason and forethought. Inferior animals that unite, are guided by instinct, which supplies the place of reason. But all these disputes are merely verbal.

NOTE [RR], p. 364.

THAT there be a separation or distinction of possessions, and that this separation be steady and constant: this is absolutely required by the interests of society; and hence the origin of justice and property. What possessions are assigned to particular persons: this is, generally speaking, pretty indifferent; and is often determined by very frivolous views and considerations. We shall mention a few particulars.

Were a society formed among several independent members, the most obvious rule which could be agreed on, would be, to annex property

perty to *preſent* poſſeſſion, and leave every one a right to what he at preſent enjoys. The relation of poſſeſſion which takes place between the perſon and the object, naturally draws on the relation of property.

For a like reaſon, occupation or firſt poſſeſſion becomes the foundation of property.

Where a man beſtows labour and induſtry upon any object which before belonged to nobody; as in cutting down and ſhaping a tree, in cultivating a field, &c. the alterations which he produces, cauſes a relation between him and the object, and naturally engages us to annex it to him, by the new relation of property. This cauſe here concurs with the public utility, which conſiſts in the encouragement given to induſtry and labour.

Perhaps too, private humanity towards the poſſeſſor concurs in this inſtance with the other motives, and engages us to leave with him what he has acquired by his ſweat and labour, and what he has flattered himſelf in the conſtant enjoyment of. For though private humanity can by no means be the origin of juſtice, ſince the latter virtue ſo often contradicts the former; yet, when the rule of ſeparate and conſtant poſſeſſion is once formed, by the indiſpenſable neceſſities of ſociety, private humanity, and an averſion to the doing a hardſhip to another, may, in a particular inſtance, give riſe to a particular rule of property.

I am much inclined to think, that the right of ſucceſſion or inheritance much depends on thoſe connections of the imagination; and that the relation to a former proprietor begetting a relation to the object, is the cauſe why the property is transferred to a man after the death of his kinſman. It is true, induſtry is more encouraged by the transference of poſſeſſion to children or near relations: But this conſideration will only have place in a cultivated ſociety; whereas the right of ſucceſſion is regarded even among the greateſt Barbarians.

Acquiſition of property, by *acceſſion*, can be explained no way but by having recourſe to the relations and connections of the imagination.

The property of rivers, by the laws of moſt nations, and by the natural turn of our thought, is attributed to the proprietors of their banks, excepting ſuch vaſt rivers as the Rhine or the Danube, which ſeem too large to follow as an acceſſion to the property of the neighbouring fields. Yet even theſe rivers are conſidered as the property of that nation through whoſe dominions they run; the idea of a nation being

being of a ſuitable bulk to correſpond with them, and bear them ſuch a relation in the fancy.

The acceſſions which are made to land bordering upon rivers, follow the land, ſay the civilians, provided it be made by what they call *alluvion*, that is, inſenſibly and imperceptibly; which are circumſtances that aſſiſt the imagination in the conjunction.

Where there is any conſiderable portion torn at once from one bank and added to another, it becomes not *his* property whoſe land it falls on, till it unite with the land, and till the trees and plants have ſpread their roots into both. Before that, the thought does not ſufficiently join them.

In ſhort, we muſt ever diſtinguiſh between the neceſſity of a ſeparation and conſtancy in mens poſſeſſion, and the rules which aſſign particular objects to particular perſons. The firſt neceſſity is obvious, ſtrong, and invincible: The latter may depend on a public utility, more light and frivolous; on the ſentiment of private humanity, and averſion to private hardſhip; on poſitive laws, on precedents, analogies, and very fine connections and turns of the imagination.

NOTE [SS], p. 368.

THE term *pride* is commonly taken in a bad ſenſe; but this ſentiment ſeems indifferent, and may be either good or bad, according as it is well or ill founded, and according to the other circumſtances which accompany it. The French expreſs this ſentiment by the term *amour propre*; but as they alſo expreſs ſelf-love, as well as vanity, by the ſame term, there ariſes thence a great confuſion in Rochefoucault, and many of their moral writers.

NOTE [TT], p. 370.

LOVE and eſteem are nearly the ſame paſſion, and ariſe from ſimilar cauſes. The qualities which produce both are ſuch as communicate pleaſure. But where this pleaſure is ſevere and ſerious; or where its object is great, and makes a ſtrong impreſſion, or where it produces any degree of humility and awe; in all theſe caſes, the paſſion which ariſes from the pleaſure is more properly denominated eſteem than love. Benevolence attends both; but is connected with love in a more eminent degree. There ſeems to be ſtill a ſtronger mixture of pride in contempt, than of humility in eſteem; and the reaſon would not be difficult to one who ſtudied accurately the paſſions. All theſe various mixtures, and compoſitions and appearances of ſentiment, form a very curious ſubject of ſpeculation, but are wide of our preſent purpoſe. Throughout this inquiry, we always conſider,

in

in general, what qualities are a ſubject of praiſe or of cenſure, without entering into all the minute differences of ſentiment which they excite. It is evident, that whatever is contemned, is alſo diſliked, as well as what is hated; and we here endeavour to take objects according to their moſt ſimple views and appearances. Theſe ſciences are but too apt to appear abſtract to common readers, even with all the precautions which we can take to clear them from ſuperfluous ſpeculations, and bring them down to every capacity.

NOTE [UU], p. 372.

THE following paſſage of Cicero is worth quoting, as being the moſt clear and expreſs to our purpoſe that any thing can be imagined; and in a diſpute which is chiefly verbal, muſt, on account of the author, carry an authority from which there can be no appeal.

"Virtus autem, quæ eſt per ſe ipſa laudabilis, et ſine qua nihil laudari poteſt, tamen habet plures partes, quarum alia eſt alia ad laudationem aptior. Sunt enim aliæ virtutes, quæ videntur in moribus hominum, et quadam comitate ac beneficentia poſitæ: aliæ quæ in ingenii aliqua facultate, aut animi magnitudine ac robore. Nam clemantia, juſtitia, benignitas, fides, fortitudo in periculis communibus, jucunda eſt auditu in laudationibus. Omnes enim hæ virtutes non tam ipſis, qui eas in ſe habent, quam generi hominum fructuoſæ putantur. Sapientia et magnitudo animi, qua omnes res humanæ, tenues et pro nihilo putantur; et in cogitando vis quædam ingenii, et ipſa eloquentia admirationis habet non minus, jucunditatis minus. Ipſos enim magis videtur, quos laudamus, quam illos, apud quos laudamus, ornare ac tueri: ſed tamen in laudanda jungenda ſunt etiam hæc genera virtutum. Ferunt enim aures hominum, cum illa quæ jucunda et grata, tum etiam illa, quæ mirabilia ſunt in virtute, laudari." *De orat. lib.* ii. *cap.* 89.

I ſuppoſe, if Cicero were now alive, it would be found difficult to fetter his moral ſentiments by narrow ſyſtems, or perſuade him that no qualities were to be admitted as *virtues*, or acknowledged to be a part of *perſonal merit*, but what were recommended by *The Whole Duty of Man*.

NOTE [XX], p. 395.

DURING the time of the emperors, the Romans ſeem to have been more given to intrigues and gallantry than the Engliſh are at preſent: And the women of condition, in order to retain their lovers, endeavoured to fix a name of reproach on thoſe who were addicted

to

to wenching and low amours. They were called Ancillarioli. See Seneca de beneficiis, lib. i. cap. 9. See alſo Martial, lib. xii. epig. 58.

NOTE [YY], p. 408.

"FRAGILIS & laborioſa mortalitas in partes iſta digeſſit, infirmitatis ſuæ memor, ut portionibus quiſquis coleret, quo maxime indigeret." Plin. lib. ii. cap. 7. So early as Heſiod's time, there were 30,000 deities. *Oper. & Dier.* lib. i. ver. 250. But the taſk to be performed by theſe ſeems ſtill too great for their number. The provinces of the deities were ſo ſubdivided, that there was even a God of *Sneezing*. See Ariſt. Probl. ſect. 33. cap. 7. The province of copulation, ſuitably to the importance and dignity of it, was divided among ſeveral deities.

NOTE [ZZ], p. 420.

IT will be eaſy to give a reaſon, why Thales, Anaximander, and thoſe early philoſophers, who really were atheiſts, might be very orthodox in the Pagan creed; and why Anaxagoras and Socrates, though real theiſts, muſt naturally, in ancient times, be eſteemed impious. The blind, unguided powers of nature, if they could produce men, might alſo produce ſuch beings as Jupiter and Neptune; who being the moſt powerful, intelligent exiſtences in the world, would be proper objects of worſhip. But where a Supreme Intelligence, the firſt cauſe of all, is admitted, theſe capricious beings, if they exiſt at all, muſt appear very ſubordinate and dependent, and conſequently be excluded from the rank of deities. Plato (de leg. lib. x.) aſſigns this reaſon for the imputation thrown on Anaxagoras, namely, his denying the divinity of the ſtars, planets, and other created objects.

NOTE [AAA], p. 437.

VERRIUS FLACCUS, cited by Pliny, lib. xxviii. cap. 2. affirmed, that it was uſual for the Romans, before they laid ſiege to any town, to invocate the tutelar deity of the place; and by promiſing him greater honours than thoſe he at preſent enjoyed, bribe him to betray his old friends and votaries. The name of the tutelar deity of Rome was for this reaſon kept a moſt religious myſtery; leſt the enemies of the republic ſhould be able, in the ſame manner, to draw him over to their ſervice. For without the name, they thought nothing of that kind could be practiſed. Pliny ſays, that the common form of invocation was preſerved to his time in the ritual of the

pontiffs. And Macrobius has tranſmitted a copy of it from the ſecret things of Sammonicus Serenus.

NOTE [BBB], p. 439.

MOST nations have fallen into this guilt of human ſacrifices; though, perhaps, that impious ſuperſtition has never prevailed very much in any civilized nation, unleſs we except the Carthaginians; for the Tyrians ſoon aboliſhed it. A ſacrifice is conceived as a preſent; and any preſent is delivered to their deity by deſtroying it, and rendering it uſeleſs to men; by burning what is ſolid, pouring out the liquid, and killing the animate. For want of a better way of doing him ſervice, we do ourſelves an injury; and fancy that we thereby expreſs, at leaſt, the heartineſs of our good-will and adoration. Thus our mercenary devotion deceives ourſelves, and imagines it deceives the deity.

NOTE [CCC], p. 448.

IT is ſtrange that the Egyptian religion, though ſo abſurd, ſhould yet have borne ſo great a reſemblance to the Jewiſh, that ancient writers even of the greateſt genius were not able to obſerve any difference between them. For it is remarkable that both Tacitus and Suetonius, when they mention that decree of the ſenate, under Tiberius, by which the Egyptian and Jewiſh proſelytes were baniſhed from Rome, expreſsly treat theſe religions as the ſame; and it appears, that even the decree itſelf was founded on that ſuppoſition. "Actum & de ſacris Ægyptiis, Judaiciſque pellendis; factumque "patrum conſultum, ut quatuor millia libertini generis *ea ſuperſtitione* "infecta, quis idonea ætas, in inſulam Sardiniam veherentur, coercendis illic latrociniis: et ſi ob gravitatem cœli interiiſſent, *vile damnum*: "Ceteri cederent Italia, niſi certam ante diem profanos ritus exuiſſent." Tacit. ann. lib. ii. c. 85. "Externas cæremonias, "Ægyptios, Judaicoſque ritus compeſcuit, coactus, qui *ſuperſtitione* "*ea* tenebantur, religioſas veſtes cum inſtrumento omni comburere," &c. Sueton. Tiber. c. 36. Theſe wiſe heathens, obſerving ſomething in the general air, and genius and ſpirit of the two religions to be the ſame, eſteemed the differences of their dogmas too frivolous to deſerve any attention.

NOTE [DDD], p. 456.

XENOPHON's conduct, as related by himſelf, is, at once, an inconteſtible proof of the general credulity of mankind in thoſe ages, and the incoherencies, in all ages, of mens opinions in religious matters. That great captain and philoſopher, the diſciple

of

of Socrates, and one who has delivered ſome of the moſt refined ſentiments with regard to a deity, gave all the following marks of vulgar Pagan ſuperſtition. By Socrates's advice, he conſulted the oracle of Delphi, before he would engage in the expedition of Cyrus. De exped. lib. iii. p. 294. ex edit. Leuncl. Has a dream the night after the generals were ſeized; which he pays great regard to, but thinks ambiguous. Id. p. 295. He and the whole army regard ſneezing as a very lucky omen. Id. p. 300. Has another dream when he comes to the river Centrites, which his fellow-general, Chiroſophus, alſo pays great regard to. Id. lib. iv. p. 323. The Greeks, ſuffering from a cold north wind, ſacrifice to it; and the hiſtorian obſerves, that it immediately abated. Id. p. 329. Xenophon conſults the ſacrifices in ſecret, before he would form any reſolution with himſelf about ſettling a colony. Lib. v. p. 359. He was himſelf a very ſkilful augur. Id. p. 361. Is determined by the victims to refuſe the ſole command of the army which was offered to him. Lib. vi. p. 273. Cleander, the Spartan, though very deſirous of it, refuſes it for the ſame reaſon, Id. p. 392. Xenophon mentions an old dream, with the interpretation given him, when he firſt joined Cyrus, p. 373. Mentions alſo the place of Hercules's deſcent into hell as believing it, and ſays the marks of it are ſtill remaining. Id. p. 375. Had almoſt ſtarved the army, rather than lead them to the field againſt the auſpices. Id. p. 382, 383. His friend, Euclides, the augur, would not believe that he had brought no money from the expedition, till he (Euclides) ſacrificed, and then he ſaw the matter clearly in the Exta. Lib. vii. p. 425. The ſame philoſopher, propoſing a project of mines for the increaſe of the Athenian revenues, adviſes them firſt to conſult the oracle. De rat. red. p. 392. That all this devotion was not a farce, in order to ſerve a political purpoſe, appears both from the facts themſelves, and from the genius of that age, when little or nothing could be gained by hypocriſy. Beſides, Xenophon, as appears from his Memorabilia, was a kind of heretic in thoſe times, which no political devotee ever is. It is for the ſame reaſon I maintain, that Newton, Locke, Clarke, &c. being *Arians* or *Socinians*, were very ſincere in the creed they profeſſed: And I always oppoſe this argument to ſome libertines, who will needs have it, that it was impoſſible but that theſe philoſophers muſt have been hypocrites.

NOTE [EEE], p. 461.

BACCHUS, a divine being, is repreſented by the heathen mythology as the inventor of dancing and the theatre. Plays were anciently even a part of public worſhip on the moſt ſolemn oc-

caſions, and often employed in times of peſtilence, to appeaſe the offended deities. But they have been zealouſly proſcribed by the godly in later ages; and the playhouſe, according to a learned divine, is the porch of hell.

But in order to ſhow more evidently, that it is poſſible for a religion to repreſent the divinity in ſtill a more immoral and unamiable light than he was pictured by the ancients, we ſhall cite a long paſſage from an author of taſte and imagination, who was ſurely no enemy to Chriſtianity. It is the Chevalier Ramſay, a writer, who had ſo laudable an inclination to be orthodox, that his reaſon never found any difficulty, even in the doctrines which freethinkers ſcruple the moſt, the trinity, incarnation, and ſatisfaction: His humanity alone, of which he ſeems to have had a great ſtock, rebelled againſt the doctrines of eternal reprobation and predeſtination. He expreſſes himſelf thus: 'What ſtrange ideas,' ſays he, 'would an Indian or a Chineſe 'philoſopher have of our holy religion, if they judged by the ſchemes 'given of it by our modern freethinkers, and phariſaical doctors of 'all ſects? According to the odious and too *vulgar* ſyſtem of theſe 'incredulous ſcoffers and credulous ſcribblers,' "The God of the Jews "is a moſt cruel, unjuſt, partial, and fantaſtical being. He created, "about 6000 years ago, a man and a woman, and placed them in a "fine garden of Aſia, of which there are no remains. This garden "was furniſhed with all ſorts of trees, fountains, and flowers. He "allowed them the uſe of all the fruits of this beautiful garden, except one, that was planted in the midſt thereof, and that had in it "a ſecret virtue of preſerving them in continual health and vigour "of body and mind, of exalting their natural powers, and making "them wiſe. The devil entered into the body of a ſerpent, and ſolicited the firſt woman to eat of this forbidden fruit; ſhe engaged "her huſband to do the ſame. To puniſh this ſlight curioſity and "natural deſire of life and knowledge, God not only threw our firſt "parents out of paradiſe, but he condemned all their poſterity to "temporal miſery, and the greateſt part of them to eternal pains, "though the ſouls of theſe innocent children have no more relation "to that of Adam, than to thoſe of Nero and Mahomet; ſince, according to the ſcholaſtic drivellers, fabuliſts, and mythologiſts, all "ſouls are created pure, and infuſed immediately into mortal bodies, "ſo ſoon as the fœtus is formed. To accompliſh the barbarous, partial decree of predeſtination and reprobation, God abandoned all nations to darkneſs, idolatry, and ſuperſtition, without any ſaving

"knowledge

" knowledge or ſalutary graces; unleſs it was one particular nation, " whom he choſe as his peculiar people. This choſen nation was, " however, the moſt ſtupid, ungrateful, rebellious and perfidious of all " nations. After God had thus kept the far greater part of all the " human ſpecies, during near 4000 years, in a reprobate ſtate, he " changed all of a ſudden, and took a fancy for other nations beſide " the Jews. Then he ſent his only begotten Son to the world, under " a human form, to appeaſe his wrath, ſatisfy his vindictive juſtice, " and die for the pardon of ſin. Very few nations, however, have " heard of this goſpel; and all the reſt, though left in invincible ig- " norance, are damned without exception, or any poſſibility of remiſ- " ſion. The greateſt part of thoſe who have heard of it, have changed " only ſome ſpeculative notions about God, and ſome external forms " in worſhip: For, in other reſpects, the bulk of Chriſtians have con- " tinued as corrupt as the reſt of mankind in their morals; yea, ſo " much the more perverſe and criminal, that their lights were greater. " Unleſs it be a very ſmall ſelect number, all other Chriſtians, like the " Pagans, will be for ever damned; the great ſacrifice offered up for " them will become void and of no effect; God will take delight for " ever in their torments and blaſphemies; and though he can, by one " *fiat*, change their hearts, yet they will remain for ever unconverted and " unconvertible, becauſe he will be for ever unappeaſable and irreconcile- " able. It is true, that all this makes God odious, a hater of ſouls, rather " than a lover of them; a cruel, vindictive tyrant, an impotent or a " wrathful dæmon, rather than an all-powerful, beneficent Father of " ſpirits: Yet all this is a myſtery. He has ſecret reaſons for his " conduct, that are impenetrable; and though he appears unjuſt and " barbarous, yet we muſt believe the contrary, becauſe what is injuſ- " tice, crime, cruelty, and the blackeſt malice in us, is in him juſtice, " mercy, and ſovereign goodneſs." 'Thus the incredulous free- 'thinkers, the Judaiſing Chriſtians, and the fataliſtic doctors, have 'diſfigured and diſhonoured the ſublime myſteries of our holy faith; 'thus they have confounded the nature of good and evil; transformed 'the moſt monſtrous paſſions into divine attributes, and ſurpaſſed the 'Pagans in blaſphemy, by aſcribing to the eternal nature, as perfec- 'tions, what makes the moſt horrid crimes amongſt men. The groſ- 'ſer Pagans contented themſelves with divinizing luſt, inceſt, and ad- 'ultery; but the predeſtinarian doctors have divinized cruelty, 'wrath, fury, vengeance, and all the blackeſt vices.' See the Cheva-

lier Ramſay's philoſophical principles of natural and revealed religion, Part II. p. 401.

The ſame author aſſerts, in other places, that the *Arminian* and *Moliniſt* ſchemes ſerve very little to mend the matter: And having thus thrown himſelf out of all received ſects of Chriſtianity, he is obliged to advance a ſyſtem of his own, which is a kind of *Origeniſm*, and ſuppoſes the pre-exiſtence of the ſouls both of men and beaſts, and the eternal ſalvation and converſion of all men, beaſts, and devils. But this notion, being quite peculiar to himſelf, we need not treat of. I thought the opinions of this ingenious author very curious, but I pretend not to warrant the juſtneſs of them.

INDEX.

INDEX.

*** The *Numeral Letters* refer to the Volume, and the *Figures* to the Page.

A

ACADEMIC philoſophy, defence of it, ii. 57.
——————— eſſay on it, ii. 166.
Alexander, the falſe prophet's wiſe policy, ii. 135.
Allegiance, foundation of this duty, ii. 258.
Allegory, a form of polytheiſm, ii. 422.
Ambiguity in moral reaſonings, its origin, ii. 74.
Amneſty introduced into Greece by Thraſybulus, i. 398.
Amorous paſſion, how compounded, ii. 210.
Animals, eſſay on their reaſon, ii. 120.
Anthropomorphiſm, inconveniences of it, ii. 518.
Arbitrary taxes, pernicious, i. 341.
Ariſtocracy odious in ancient Greece, i. 404.
Ariſtophanes's impieties, why tolerated, ii. 417.
Ariſtotle's liſt of the virtues, ii. 372.
Arts, the nature and conſequences of their refinement examined, i. 266.
Arts and ſciences, their riſe and progreſs, i. 111.
Aſſociation of ideas, eſſay on it, ii. 36.
——————— of impreſſions and ideas, ii. 192.
Atheiſm not more hoſtile than religion, to ſocial order, ii. 151.
Athenian law, a ſingular one explained, ii. 261.
Athenians, money amaſſed by them, i. 321.
Athens, number of its citizens, i. 416.
Attalus, criminal expreſſion of his gratitude, i. 389.
Attributes of the Deity, their character, ii. 513.
Avarice, why blamed, ii. 290.

B

BALANCE of power, mentioned by Xenophon, i. 330.
——— of trade, dependent upon induſtry and ingenuity, i. 307.
——————— of power, eſſay on it, i. 330.

Baniſhment of Protagoras, an almoſt ſingular inſtance of perſecution among the ancients, ii. 148.
Baniſhments from the Grecian republics, i. 517.
Bank-credits of Edinburgh, i. 318.
Bankruptcy, national, the beſt termination of the career of public debt, i. 360.
Barbarous nations prone to fancy imaginary miracles, ii. 134.
Battles of antiquity, bloody, i. 396.
Beauty gives delight to the beholder, ii. 196.
Belief defined, ii. 63.
Benevolence, inquiry into its nature, ii. 229.
Berkley, an involuntary teacher of ſcepticiſm, ii. 610.
Berne, canton of, their riches, i. 322.
Bigotry, the offſpring of philoſophy, ii. 149.
Bodily ſtrength, praiſed by the ancients as a virtue, ii. 297.
Britiſh conſtitution, how it may be made a perfect limited monarchy, i. 502.
Britiſh government, diſtribution of power in it, i. 54.
Britons anxious to maintain the balance of power in Europe, i. 336.

C

CARTEL, only one in ancient hiſtory, i. 397.
Caſſius's character not enviable, ii. 302.
Cato, the elder, accuſtomed to ſell his ſuperannuated ſlaves, i. 376.
Cellæ, the rooms of the Roman ſlaves ſo named, i. 384.
Cenſus of Athens, i. 418.
Chance, its nature explained, ii. 71.
Charles the Twelfth, judgment of his heroiſm, ii. 310.
Chaſtity, origin of this duty, ii. 259.
China, amazingly populous, i. 389.
—— drains Europe of the precious metals, i. 311.
Chineſe deſpotiſm, how moderated, i. 507.
—— beat their idols, ii. 416.
Cicero, argument of his, againſt the Epicureans, ii. 233.
Cicero's judgment of Pompey, ii. 371.
Circle, its qualities explained by Euclid, ii. 248.
Civil laws, alone, mark the terms of preſcription, ii. 251.
Cleanlineſs, a virtue, ii. 319.
Clergymen neceſſarily hypocritical, i. 509.
Cobwebs of Rome, weight of them, i. 410.
Commerce, ſtate of it among the ancient Greeks, i. 407.

Commerce, eſſay on it, i. 250.
Commonwealth, idea of a perfect one, i. 487.
Compaſſion, in what caſe it chiefly ariſes, ii. 208.
Conſtantine's mode of taxation ruinous to the Roman empire, i. 342.
Convention, human, the foundation of juſtice, ii. 361.
Corn, exportation of, prohibited in France, i. 307.
—— the diſtribution of it hurtful to the population of Rome and Italy, i. 438.
Corruption of Theiſm, worſe than Polytheiſm, ii. 440.
Courage, its utility, ii. 305.
Credit, public, eſſay on it, i. 344.
Cteſiphon tried for procuring a crown to Demoſthenes, i. 362.
Cyrus, a deciſion of his, ii. 360.

D

DECENCY, a quality agreeable to others, ii. 319.
Deity, ſeemingly the author of moral evil, ii. 119.
Deities, not originally conſidered as formers of the world, ii. 414.
Delicacy of taſte and paſſion, eſſay on it, i. 17.
Delphi, oracle of, ii. 438.
Democracy, a ſingular law neceſſary to its ſupport in Athens, i. 364.
Demoſthenes's generoſity to Eſchines, ii. 268.
Dialogues concerning natural religion, ii. 472.
Dignity of human nature, eſſay on it, i. 82.
Diogenes, a celebrated model of extravagant philoſophy, ii. 397.
Dione's obſervation to Venus on her being wounded, ii. 416.
Dionyſius, the number of his ſtanding army exaggerated, i. 414.
Diſcretion, an uſeful virtue, ii. 287.
Divine nature, impious conceptions of it, ii. 458.
Dogmatiſm, unphiloſophical, ii. 332.
Drinking, a Greek proverb concerning it, ii. 262.
Dutch, their trade liable to be injured by the commercial proſperity of their neighbours, i. 329.
Duties, of two kinds, i. 457.

E

EFFECTS meaſure the power of their cauſe, ii. 152.
Egypt exports black ſlaves, and imports white, i. 388.
Egyptians' abhorrence of bacon, ii. 252.
Egyptians, their reſpect for their ridiculous deities, ii. 449.
Elections, how managed, i. 435.
Elizabeth, Queen, ſuppoſition concerning her, ii. 145.

Eloquence, compariſon of ancient with modern eloquence, i. 99.
——— moſt ſucceſsful, when it addreſſes the groſſer paſſions, ii. 133.
Elyſian fields, poetical ideas of them, ii. 309.
Epictetus's chearful poverty, ii. 308.
Epicurean, eſſay in the character of one, i. 138.
Epicurus's inquiry concerning Chaos, ii. 420.
Ergaſtula for ſlaves, common through ancient Italy, i. 376.
Eſſay in the character of a Sceptic, i. 160.
—— on polygamy and divorce, i. 182.
Europe, its climate now milder than anciently, i. 431.
Evil, why objects are ſaid to be ſo, ii. 184.
Evils of national debt, i. 351.
Expence, comparative, of the Roman and the Britiſh armies, i. 513.
Experience, the ſource of all our knowledge of cauſe and effect, ii. 44.

F

FANATICS who ſuppoſe dominion founded on grace, ii. 247.
Fear, its origin in the mind, ii. 185.
Figs, exportation of, from Attica, prohibited by law, i. 307.
Final cauſe of the cuſtomary induction of power from change, ii. 69.
Flux and reflux of polytheiſm and theiſm, ii. 434.
Foundling hoſpitals, unfavourable to population, i. 390.
Fourli, deſcription of this country and its inhabitants, ii. 377.
France, when vines were tranſplanted into it, ii. 529.
French poet, the predilection of one for Ovid and Horace, at different ages, ii. 274.
Frugality, an important virtue, ii. 289.
Funds, public, uſeful to commerce, i. 348.
Future retribution, more equal than that in the preſent life, not to be expected, ii. 157.

G

GALLANTRY, the conſequence of a free intercourſe between the ſexes, ii. 394.
Gauls, number of, ſlain by Julius Cæſar, i. 413.
Gee, Mr, his writings alarmed the nation, i. 308.
Getes, believers in the ſoul's immortality, ii. 433.
God repreſented by ſome philoſophers, as acting immediately on the mind in all thoſe caſes in which our ideas ſeem to be derived from matter, ii. 86.
Golden age deſcribed, ii. 242.

Government, firſt principles of it, i. 39.
——————— its origin, i. 44.
Greatneſs of mind, expreſſions of it, ii. 304.
Greeks, attentive to the balance of power, i. 331.
——— their free governments oppreſſive and unſettled, i. 401.
Guicciardin and Thucydides, what is moſt intereſting in their reſpective hiſtories, ii. 275.
Guicciardin's character of Alexander the Third, ii. 373.
——————— remark on the wars of Italy, ii. 212.

H

HABIT, the principle in our nature, by which we refer effects to their cauſes, ii. 58.
Harangue in the name of Epicurus, ii. 151.
Harry VII., treaſure hoarded by him, i. 320.
Harry the Fourth of France's amours, ii. 310.
Helotes, the only ſlaves in Greece who continued their race, i. 384.
Hero-worſhip, a form of Polytheiſm, ii. 422.
Hezekiah's treaſure, i. 345.
Hobbes, the ſtate of nature not firſt ſtarted by him, ii. 612.
Homer's theology corrupting, ii. 461.
Horace, a beautiful quotation from him, ii. 189.
Human mind compared to a ſtringed muſical inſtrument, ii. 187.
Humanity, the ultimate principle of virtue, ii. 327.
Hutchinſon, Mr, his ſcheme for the payment of the national debt, i. 356.
Huygens has demonſtrated the moſt advantageous form of a ſhip, i. 488.
Hyperides tried for procuring liberty to the Athenian ſlaves, i. 363.

J

JACOBINS unhappy in their doctrine, ii. 430.
Ichthyophagi mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, ii. 419.
Ideas, their origin, ii. 30.
Jealouſy of trade, eſſay on it, i. 325.
——————— how far reaſonable, i. 325.
Jealouſy of France, an inſtance in which it is unſerviceable to Britain, i. 313.
Impreſſions diſtinguiſhed from ideas, ii. 31.
Inceſt, whence its turpitude, ii. 261.
Independence of Parliament, its foundation and effects examined, i. 49.

Induſtry of a nation uſeful to its neighbours, i. 327.
Induſtry, an uſeful virtue, ii. 289.
Inquiry into the principles of morals, ii. 222.
Inſtances of equality among the Greeks, i. 392.
Inſtincts, the guiding principles alike of men and of brutes, ii. 123.
Intereſt of money lent, eſſay on it, i. 293.
Intereſt, rate of it at Athens, i. 406.
Intolerance of religions, ii. 438.
Iphicrates's defence of his honeſty, ii. 317.
Ireland, Spencer's account of it, ii. 307.
Irregularity in the courſe of events explained, ii. 101.
Juſtice, its nature examined, ii. 236.
—— diſtinguiſhed from ſuperſtition by its utility, ii. 253.

K

KINGLY power, its origin, i. 445.
King of Britain above the laws, i. 467.
Knowledge of cauſe and effect, inquiry into its origin, ii. 40.

L

LACEDÆMONIANS, why they prayed in the morning, ii. 417.
Land, whether all taxes ought to be levied upon it, i. 343.
Laws, Roman, productive of maſſacres, i. 403.
Laws of property numerous, yet imperfect, i. 460.
—— of nature violated by miracles, ii. 129.
—— of nations, their origin, ii. 258.
Leibnitz denies the exiſtence of evil, ii. 553.
Levellers, their origin in England, ii. 247.
Liberty and neceſſity, eſſay on them, ii. 94.
Liberty of the preſs, eſſay on it, i. 21.
Liberty, civil, eſſay on it, i. 89.
Life, polite letters pictures of it, ii. 22.
Livy's character of Hannibal, ii. 373.
Locke, likely to be forgotten before Addiſon, ii. 20.
Locke's diviſion of arguments, ii. 70.
Love defined, ii. 191.
Love, court of, in Provence, ii. 263.
Lucian's account of Alexander, the falſe prophet, ii. 135.
Lucretius, an Epicurean, ii. 424.
———— when he brought cherry-trees into Europe, ii. 525.
Lyſias, an inſtance from his orations, of the reſerve of Grecian women, ii. 393.

Ma-

M

MAGIANS, their account of the original intelligence, ii. 432.
Malice incompatible with humanity, ii. 279.
Manicheans, conſequence of their principles, ii. 279.
Manufactures, a variety of theſe more advantageous to a ſtate than any one very great manufacture, i. 328.
Marriages not encouraged among the ſlaves of antiquity, i. 385.
Marſeilles, its ancient commercial greatneſs, i. 523.
Marſhal Vauban's judgement of prohibiting duties, i. 314.
Maſſacres in ancient Greece, i. 400.
——— in the Grecian republics, i. 517.
Maurice of Orange's implied praiſe of his own military talents, ii. 317.
Medium, eſteemed by the Peripatetics the perfection of virtue, ii. 285.
Memory more valued in ancient than in modern times, ii. 293.
Menander, a ſaying of his, i. 509.
Metaphyſics, reaſons for ſtudying them, ii. 22.
Miracles, eſſay on them, ii. 124.
Miracles wrought at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, ii. 607.
Money, eſſay on its uſe in commerce, i. 279.
Money, effects of its ſudden augmentation or diminution, i. 310.
Moors and Capuchins, their mutual admiration, ii. 447.
Morals, inquiry into their principles, ii. 222.
Moral neceſſity, caſes in which it is counted as powerful as phyſical, ii. 106.
Moral ſentiment conſidered, ii. 339.
Mortgaging and hoarding compared, i. 346.

N

NAMES of Athenian ſlaves, i. 381.
National characters, eſſay on them, i. 198.
Navigation, inſtance of its imperfection among the Athenians, i. 407.
Neceſſary connection, its nature inveſtigated, ii. 77.
Neceſſity, eſſay on liberty and neceſſity, ii. 94.
——— the ſupreme Deity of the ancient Greeks and Romans, ii. 421.
Negroes, ſuſpected to be naturally inferior to the whites, i. 512.
Novelty, whence its power over the mind, ii. 220.
Numbers, in ancient hiſtory, of uncertain fidelity, i. 410.
Numbers of men increaſe not by propagation in populous and opulent cities, i. 379.

O

OBEDIENCE, paſſive, eſſay on it, i. 464.
Objects of human reaſon, general diviſion of them, ii. 38.
Oceana of Harrington, its chief defects, i. 489.
Oracles, character of Plutarch's account of their ſilence, i. 525.
Orators, Athenian, liable to trial on account of laws paſſed on their motion, i. 362.
Origin of our ideas of cauſe and effect, inexplicable, ii. 53.
—— of family pride, ii. 199.
—— of Polytheiſm, ii. 406.
Original contract, eſſay on it, i. 442.
———— its import, i. 445.

P

PAINTERS leſs fond of imitating the melancholy paſſions, i. 512.
Paper-money, uſeleſs and dangerous, i. 315.
Parties, eſſay on them, i. 60.
Parties of Great Britain, i. 68.
Paſſions, a diſſertation on them, ii. 184.
Pathetic and ſublime of ſentiment, their power to exalt the man poſſeſſed of them, ii. 312.
Pentateuch, the miracles it relates incredible, ii. 146.
Pericles, ſaying by him on his death-bed, ii. 230.
Perſecution and toleration, religions compared with reſpect to them, ii. 436.
Perſians, careful to preſerve a balance of power among the Greeks, i. 332.
Perſian nobility, i. 505.
Perſonal merit, in what it conſiſts, ii. 321.
Philip deſcribed by Demoſthenes, ii. 306.
Philoſophy, its different ſpecies, ii. 17.
Platoniſts, the moſt religious Pagans, ii. 509.
———— eſſay in the character of one, i. 156.
Plutarch's account of the population of Greece examined, i. 440.
———— enlarged views of virtue and vice, ii. 372.
Politeneſs, a virtue, ii. 313.
Politics reducible to a ſcience, i. 25.
Polybius's account of the origin of virtue, ii. 267.
———— cenſure of Timæus, ii. 374.
Polytheiſm the primary religion of men, ii. 401.
———— ſociable, ii. 439.

Pompey, ſincerity of his devotion, ii. 451.
Pontus, corn exported from it, i. 519.
Poor happier at ancient Athens than the rich, i. 400.
Populouſneſs of ancient nations, i. 370.
Porters, chained ſlaves employed as ſuch in old Rome, i. 377.
Power examined, ii. 81.
Pox, ſmall and venereal, deſtroy great numbers of mankind, i. 372.
Preſcription, term of, in ancient Italy, i. 396.
Preſſing of ſeamen vindicated, i. 368.
Pride defined, ii. 191.
Principles of connection among ideas, ii. 37.
Probability, eſſay on it, ii. 70.
Problematical queſtions concerning the laws of kingly ſucceſſion, i. 460.
Profits of trade at Athens, i. 406.
Proofs that men's principles of virtue change with time and place, ii. 382.
Property, the relation which has the greateſt influence on our paſſions, ii. 201.
Proteſtant ſucceſſion, eſſay on it, i. 477.
Providence denied by Epicurus, ii. 157.
Ptolemies, their treaſure, i. 322.

Q

QUALITIES uſeful to ourſelves conſidered, ii. 284.
——— agreeable to ourſelves conſidered, ii. 301.
——— immediately agreeable to others, ii. 313.
Quantity and number, the only proper objects of abſtract ſcience, ii. 181.
Quintus Curtius's account of the walls of Alexandria, i. 522.
——— inſtances in which his veracity is ſuſpicious, ii. 99.

R

RACINE, the narrator of a miracle, ii. 609.
Real origin of governments, i. 447.
Reaſon of animals, eſſay on it, ii. 120.
—— confounded by the infinite diviſibility of matter, ii. 174.
—— the foundation of morals, ii. 224.
—— the morality of actions cannot be accounted for by it alone, ii. 348.
Reaſon and abſurdity of religions conſidered, ii. 443.
—— diſtinguiſhed from experience, ii. 600.

Reaſonings concerning matters of fact, their foundation, ii. 39.
Reaſons of ſtate, their authority over juſtice, ii. 259.
Recollection fainter than immediate ſenſation, ii. 30.
Related ideas, impreſſions, and emotions, excite the paſſions, ii. 195.
Religion, natural hiſtory of it, ii. 400.
———, its influence on courage, ii. 440.
Rent of a houſe at Athens, i. 406.
Republic of Plato, not to be realized, i. 489.
Reſiſtance to governments, lawful in extraordinary caſes, i. 465.
Retz, Cardinal de, a miracle related from him, ii. 139.
Revolution in 1688, its nature, i. 449.
——— wiſdom of it, i. 480.
Riches, why they command reſpect, ii. 298.
Roman-Catholic ceremonies defended, ii. 65.
Roman *comitia*, i. 366.
——— civil wars, bloody, i. 402.
Rome, numbers of its inhabitants calculated, i. 424.
—— its extent, i. 521.

S

SCEPTICAL ſolution of ſceptical doubts, ii. 54.
Scepticiſm, a neceſſary preparative to the ſtudy of philoſophy, ii. 167.
Scepticiſm, Polytheiſm, and Theiſm, all alike probable, ii. 531.
Sceptics, their doctrine and practice at variance, ii. 483.
Sciences which inveſtigate relations, enumerated, ii. 38.
Self-love conſidered as a principle of action, ii. 350.
Seneca's picture of diſorderly luxury, i. 377.
Sentiment, the foundation of morals, ii. 225.
Serviua Tullus's laws reaſonable, i. 404.
Simplicity and refinement, eſſay on theſe qualities in writing, i. 192.
Slavery, domeſtic, hurtful to the manners, i. 375.
Society, political, its nature examined, ii. 257.
Socrates's reaſon for refuſing to eſcape from priſon, i. 464.
Socrates and his Athenian club, ii. 383.
——— accuſed of impiety for rejecting abſurdities, ii. 456.
Sovereigns, in what ſenſe they are God's vicegerents, i. 443.
State, number of its creditors, i. 512.
States, ſmall, moſt favourable to population, i. 391.
Stilpo, cauſe of his baniſhment, ii. 425.
Stoic, eſſay in his character, i. 146.

Stoical maxims, ſome reaſonable ones, i. 508.
Stoics, pitiful in their religious ſentiments, ii. 455.
Strangers all eſteemed enemies by the ancient Romans, i. 512.
Strength of mind uſeful, ii. 291.
Superſtition, they whoſe courſe of life is uncertain, moſt liable to it, ii. 412.
Superſtition and enthuſiaſm, eſſay on them, i. 76.
Swift, Dr, Iriſh reaſoning of his, i. 309.
Swine, numerous in Italy, i. 427.
Sympathy ſtrongly affects all our opinions, ii. 202.

T

TACITUS, the power of his deſcriptions, ii. 275.
Tacitus and Polybius, mutual reſemblance of the men deſcribed by them, ii. 98.
Taniſtry, anciently prevalent in Gaul, i. 436.
Taſte, its ſtandard inveſtigated, i. 224.
Taxes, eſſay on them, i. 339.
Tendency of the jealouſy of trade, i. 329.
Terms, correlative, an inference from the uſe of them, i. 515.
Theiſm, its proceſſion from Polytheiſm, ii. 426.
Theiſts denying a particular providence, ii. 427.
Theory of hope and fear, ii. 185.
Thucydides's account of the civil diſſenſions in Greece, i. 399.
Tillotſon, Dr, his argument againſt the real preſence, ii. 124.
Timon, a ſaying of his, ii. 279.
Torture, anciently inflicted on ſlaves, i. 377.
Toryiſm, reaſon of its principles, i. 471.
Towns, cauſes which check the enormous increaſe of their population, i. 429.
Trade, balance of, i. 307.
Trade with Spain and Portugal, reaſon why all other nations gain by it, i. 311.
Trading cities of antiquity, i. 340.
Tragedy, eſſay on it, i. 214.
Tranquillity, an uſeful, and therefore a virtuous quality, ii. 307.
Travellers, why laviſh of their praiſe to the Chineſe and Perſians, ii. 213.
Turenne, M., excellence aſcribed to him by St Evremond, ii. 288.
Turkiſh Emperor may not impoſe a new tax, i. 343.

Twins frequently born in Egypt and Attica, i. 514.
Tyrannicide, why it is now conſidered as criminal, ii. 234.

U

UNIFORMITY in human actions, a ground of inference, ii. 103.
Union of Scotland with England, one of its effects, i. 312.
Union of ſoul with body, myſterious, ii. 79.
Univerſe, cauſes of its miſery and ills, ii. 568.
Uſury not directly permitted in France, i. 316.
Utility, general, the fundamental principle of governments, i. 458.
—— of Pyrrhoniſm, ii. 178.
—— the reaſon why we praiſe benevolence, ii. 232.
—— why it pleaſes, ii. 264.
Utopia of Sir Thomas More, imaginary, i. 489.
Varro's caution in his account of religion, ii. 450.
Verbal diſputes, ii. 365.
Vice compatible with ſuperſtition, ii. 466.
Virgin, ſtate of mind in which ſhe goes to bed on her bridal night, ii. 189.
Vis inertiæ explained, ii. 602.
Vitellius, picture of him by Tacitus, ii. 304.
Vulgar lying, origin of it, ii. 197.
Vulgar ſuperſtition, its hurtful character accounted for, ii. 587.

W

WARS, continual among the free ſtates of antiquity, i. 394.
Wealth of the Athenians inconſiderable, i. 417.
Whiggiſm, reaſon of its principles, i. 469.
Wit, agreeable by its utility, ii. 324.
Witneſſes, their evidence founded on experience, ii. 127.
Wonders, the love of them natural to man, ii. 132.

X

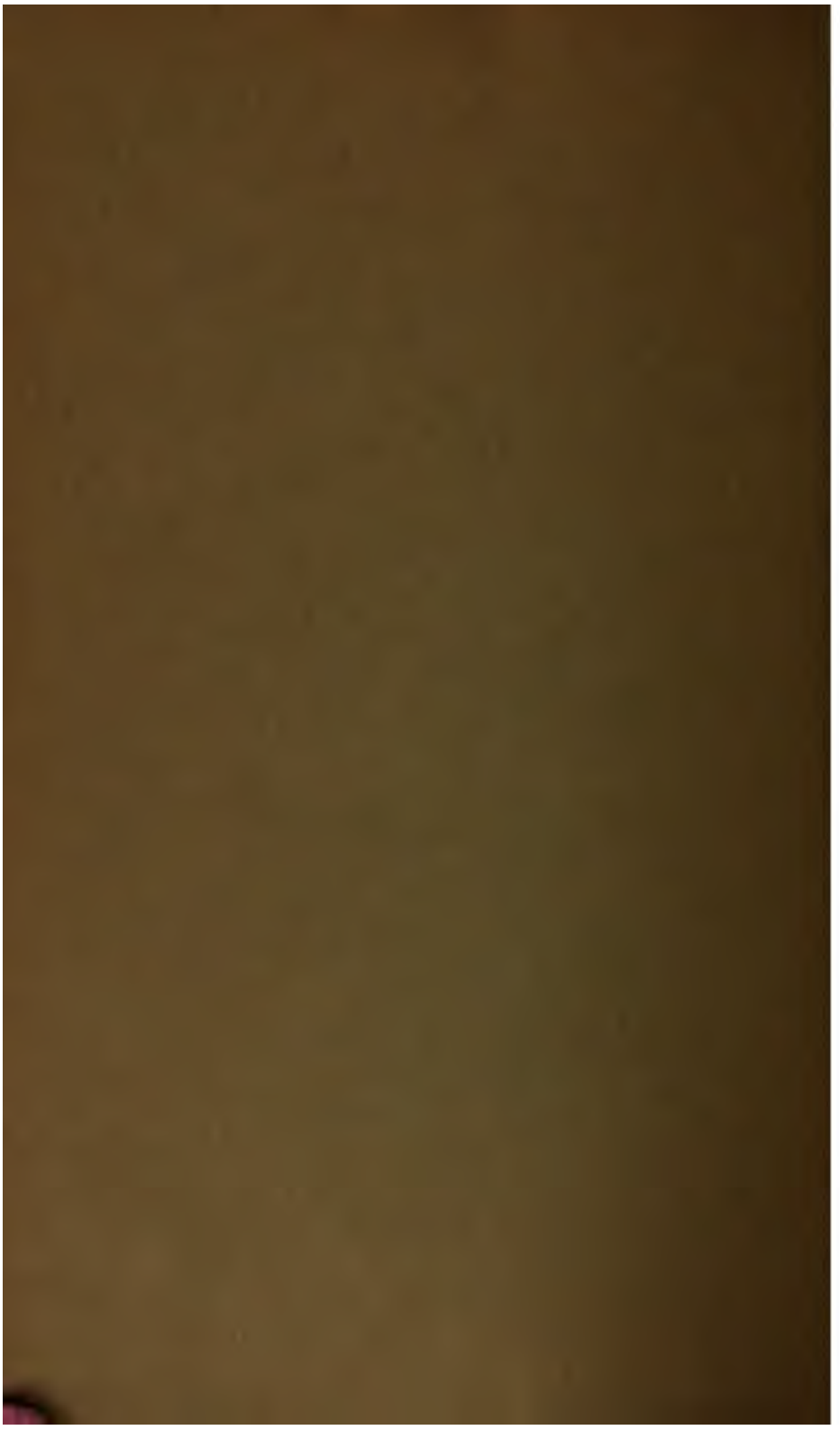
XERXES' army numerous, i. 412.

Y

YORKSHIRE, price of proviſions in it, relatively to the London price, i. 349.

Z

ZOROASTER, enumeration of acts to which his religion aſcribes merit, ii. 234.



AUG 3 1 1932